

100% SNES

INSIDE: Virtual Soccer: the sensible choice? • Timeslip • Wordtris • Aero The Acrobat • Shadowrun guide • Super Conflict • SFI Turbo: the endings revealed • Sunstirn Challenge

SNES FORCE

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and Total Carnage
in festive clash!

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The stunning sequel to Star Wars

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Can Virgin's Cool Spot conquer the SNES?

impact
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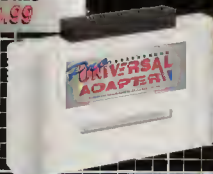
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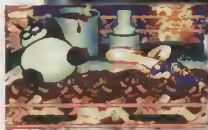
GAME CENTRES

WH SMITH



WOOLWORTHS





The high kicks, the low down...

With Christmas looming large on the horizon, we check out the latest beat-'em-ups from the land of the rising sun. Catch the leg sweeps, the body blows and uppercuts starting with *Dragon* on page 26

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Over 300 games



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welcome to **SNES** **FORCE**

...Europe's most
dedicated SNES read.
This month's favourite
games are...



Chris Rice
editor
Super Empire



Charlie Chubb
senior designer
Super Empire



Jon Bruford
sub editor
Aero The Acro-bat



Will Evans
reviewer
Cool Spot



Chris Hayward
reviewer
Super Empire



Simon Hill
reviewer
Super Empire

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The NEWS

December 93

Around the SNES world in 31 days...

THE POWER OF N

On Wednesday October 27th Nintendo showed off their new product lines and accompanying advertising campaign for Christmas to the press and select members of the public, at a glitzy affair dubbed *The Power of N*. The Ark in Hammeramith was specially hired as a venue, and above the balloon and banner-infested reception area on the ground floor, the first floor's various sections and walkways were divided into separate game sections. Rows of consoles in fibre-glass arcade cases lined the walls, with the gaming areas separated by three bars, a *Zelda* magic stage, an interview section, the main presentation area and video wall where Mark Goodier hosted the evening's entertainment, from between a huge *Street Fighter II* banner and the central *SFII* challenge area. Circling out from this were sections devoted to *Mario All-Stars*, *SFII Turbo*, *Starwing*, *Zelda 3* and *NES/GameBoy*.

Celebrities nabbed by the radio One DJ for 'a few quick words' included Shaman's Colin Angus, Mika Edwards of Jesus Jesus, UK Nintendo Champion Metro and John Leslie off *Blue Peter* (all the top stars!). *Merlo* and *Luigi* were constantly

present, along with a robot mime and the officials organising the unending game challenges being waged throughout the building, with prizes for completing the first of the new *Lost Levels* in five lives, a time limit challenge on *Starwing* and the grand *Street Fighter II Turbo* tournament. After a synchronised display of real live *Martial Arts* by four blokes with sticks and a weird female Magician on the *Zelda* stage, the eight new TV commercials were premiered on the video wall and multiple screens around the separate sections. Starring Rik Mayall with the odd guest appearance by Craig Charles, the ads use a specially created Nintendo language in Ninjamen's silly promotions for *Mario All-Stars*, Nigel Mansell's *F1*, *SFII Turbo*, the stand-alone *SNES* and *Zelda* on *GameBoy* amongst others.

New hardware bundles were also unveiled in a Christmas press package included in the *SNES* version of *Aladdin* plus its own £149 *SNES* bundle, but no *SFII Turbo* pack in time for Christmas, that's been saved for the '94 agenda. Still running are the *All-Stars* and *Starwing* packs, the *SNES* with a joystick and no software retaining its £90 tag. When the ads ran one last time and everyone was feeling much appreciative of Nintendo's Stella and while wine marketing policies the *Turbo* Tournament finals were held with Ken unsurprising victory for Metro as Ken (Simon Hill was not present). For all the hot news and updates, *SNES FORCE* has it first.



EA TAKES BULLS BY HORNS

Lanky men in vests who make 25 suits from, gorgeous girls flaunting themselves in front of the crowd — this is basketball and a game simulating the high octane action of one of the most prolific federations the far side of the ocean — the NBA. In this association the players are the best b-ball stars you could ever hope to find. *NBA Showdown* hopes to capture the wildly entertaining sport with as many crazy slam dunks as it can possibly cram in.

All 27 NBA teams and players in the 1993 season are included so you can pick from the top stars in the business. Full season play, pre-season matches, play-offs and even the ability to create your own side *NBA* definitely isn't short on options. You could pit an entire team of Charles Barkley's against a side of Shaquille O'Neal's — the match of the decade Hell, the match of time itself.

With trademark moves, injuries and even fan gas

affecting the game, realism is about to reach new heights in... er... realism! The season begins this January but don't forget our pre-release contents next issue.



Prepare for non stop slammin'-n-jammin', backboard-busting action in EA's *NBA Showdown*.

LETHAL ENFORCERS

Producer Konami
Available December
Status Japanese release

Basting its way onto a console near you in coming months is the conversion of the wonderful *Lethal Enforcers*, brought to the SNES by con-op giants Konami.

The game puts the player into the shoes of a rookie policeman who's stumbled into the middle of a bank robbery shootout, and only lightning-fast reflexes and a well-honed trigger finger are gonna save you. 'How can I do this?' we hear you cry, 'I'll blow ya the telly!' Well, Konami, in their infinite wisdom, are supplying a tasteful pastel-blue handgun. In every gamepak, essential for all you would-be unformed psychopaths.

Over five stages of on-the-level, realistic blast-em-up action in a first-person perspective, you'll face countless dangers including ninjas and heavily armed vikings, from high-speed car chases to subway madness. During all the frantic furor, you must protect the public while working your way through the ranks to the heady title of Commander.

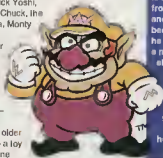
Crime is rife on the streets, and only one person can put a stop to it — you! Whip out your standard issue .357, have your truncheon at the ready and hit the city. Just remember — let's be careful out there..



The coin-op's stunning digitised graphics are faithfully reproduced in Konami's hard-hittin' conversion.

DOLLY MIXTURES

His games have made him a superstar and now Mario is immortalised. In fact he's been stuffed! A range of *Super Mario World* Plush Doll Sets is Vic Tokai and Hobby Hobbies' answer to adrent lads who want a cuddly character of their own. The range features stars eye open for the plumber himself, dino sidekick Yoshi, the fiendish Magikoopa, Monty Mole, a Boo buddy and the well slapper Rip Van Fish. The Mario sets should be popping up in all good video games stores at this very moment — saving the embarrassment for older readers trailing into a toy shop to purchase one.



HUMANS

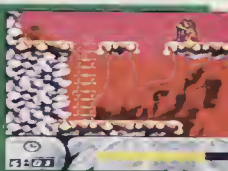
Producer Gametek
Available January
Status Official UK release

Computer to console conversions are becoming increasingly common these days. Some gamers argue about the lack of originality on the sales while others are all too eager to see games of yesteryear making a return to the games market. This is fine considering the quality of many games but do we really want to welcome *Pacman* and *Frogger* back to our screens? Fortunately Gametek have converted a worthy game in the form of *Humans*.

Humans is a tale of prehistoric times when man was on the brink of gaining intelligence (just like



Using varying amounts of tribesmen the aim is to solve the many intricate strategy-based puzzles.



Cooperation, invention and sheer brain power are the keys to overcoming many of the puzzles.

SNES FORCE) trying to comprehend the complexities of evolution. Dispersing, fire, the wheel, primitive weapons — these are just some of the many features the human tribes have to get their dense heads around. Set over 80 levels of stone-age scenarios the tribals work together to complete the stage puzzles — this could be something as easy as finding a spear or crossing perilous pits to slay a dinosaur. The player controls one cave-man at a time and is able to switch between any one of the team. Prehistoric they may be, but in the hands of 20th century gamers the tribes can perform nifty tricks — standing on each others heads to form a human ladder, pole-vauling, riding stone wheels and much, much more. Out in all weathers watch out for the backgrounds depicting the seasons — calm seas, thunderous skies, it's all here. If the prehistoric platform puzzling you're after, look out for a full review in upcoming issue.

PINKING OUT THE BLACK...

Aiming to corner the post-Christmas market and make a spectacular start to '94 is the January-scheduled *Pink Panther* from Tecmagik. This platform licensee stars the ever-popular blushing feline complete with full supporting cast from his cartoons and the instantly recognisable Henry Mancini theme tune.

Everyone remembers sitting in front of the TV as a nipper on a Saturday morning and watching that blond kid girl into a drag racer and burn around America with the *slinky Pink Panther*, that *ninky-dink panther*... ash, the joys of youth. But where is he now. After the last few years of absence from Pinky as he played the poetic recluse and hid away (surviving the temptation to become a bitter and twisted old sorcerer) he decided it was time for a comeback in a new film. He went to audition at the studios for a part in the new Inspector Clouseau movie. However, as luck would have it the philful puss gets lost and aimlessly wanders various sets, which is where the game starts. The numerous levels include the haunted Pinkenstein's Mansion

and olde English Sherwood Forest-style Robin Hood set, all peopled by nasties and various other characters drawn to look as if they'd just pranced out of one of the classic old toons.

Collectables include fly swatters and guns with extendible boxing gloves attached to capture the fast-paced slapstick humour of the original adventure.

Also in the pipeline from Tecmagik is *Andre Agassi's Tennis* an all-action Tennis aim featuring the special moves and characteristic trademarks of the former Wimbledon champion.

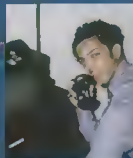
For those with a little more taste for adventure you'll be thrilled to know their much publicised Steven Segal game is coming on in leaps and bounds. Still no firm release date yet but pencil in mid '94 in your diary. In the meantime, remember, for the latest news on hot games, don't pussy foot around — read it here first.

20/20

Ever wonder exactly what playtesters do? Who the lucky people are and how they got into it in the first place? SNES FORCE talks to Ravi Chopra, games tester at US Gold, to get the lowdown...

Q: Hi Ravi. Could you tell us about your job — most people think playtesters sit around all day and play games — what do you actually do?

A: My job is to sit down and evaluate a game to find any problems or make suggestions on improvements. Two major points in my job are having the ability to find bugs and being able to play and focus on a game for long periods of time. If a game is released containing bugs, the tester who checked the game is held responsible. Everything from crashes, corrupt graphics, incorrect sound and missing problems are



AGED 17 and already a superstar — it's a playtester's life for Ravi.

bugs which need to be found. I have to prepare descriptive reports detailing bugs, and a lot of off-site testing has to be done which means going to development studios all over the country.

Q: What projects have you worked on previously?

A: Flashback (SNES), Winter Olympics (all formats), Gunship (MEG), Robocod (Game Gear and Master System). At the moment I'm working on Winter Olympics on the PC and I've also been doing a little work on Incredible Hulk on the MegaDrive.

Q: Is it hard work?

A: Yes. Sometimes I have to work on more than one major project in a day, as well as doing other jobs. There's always work to be done. Testers get third party software to work on, as well as a lot of new games which we evaluate for Centresoft.

Q: How did you get the job?

A: When I was at college studying a computer course, the time was approaching for my two weeks work experience and my best bet was to get some experience with a computer company. Thanks to a friend named Dan Llewellyn I received a placement at US Gold. At the end of the first week I was offered a full time job, which I accepted with pleasure. I started age 15 (Ravi is 17 now).

Q: Is there any advice for the thousands of readers that want to be playtesters?

A: Write to companies enquiring about work experience placements or job vacancies, learn as much as you can about consoles, computers, new technology and different types of games. Try and get yourself noticed by people in the industry and you never know — one day, your luck could be in...

Thanks to Ravi Ravi. For a more in-depth look at the life of a playtester, see the back-page feature this issue, join us again next month for a look behind the scenes of the software industry.

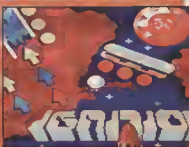
Pinball Dreams

Producer: Gametek
Available: January
Status: Official UK release

Pinball Dreams aims to capture all the titling and metal pinging of those lavish quid-a-go machines found in every arcade and adorning pub leagues. Considering the lack of pinball simulations (we tallied one good game on the last count) there's definitely room in the market. Dreams features four tables each with an authentic theme.



The game features four tables each filled with special bonuses and targets.



There's Ignition, where budding astronomy freaks play ball over a backdrop of space effects and big rockets. Sweet Wheel is set against the American Wild West, Nightmare contains haunting graveyard scenes and there's the postcard feel of Baseball. Instead of flickering scenes of the table as the ball bobs around, Dreams incorporates a scrolling screen to keep up with the frantic bonus bashing. Musical scores in time with the thumping action and effects that really are special are also promised. This could be what dreams are made of, so sit quiet when they appear in January...

GET A GRIP

The yuletide season sees the release of the Dual Turbo Remote Controllers by Addam — two ergonomically-designed (easy to hold in other words) pads with the added bonus of being remote controlled. So long to strands of twisted wire as you grapple with pads that fit your hand as snugly as flanneling clothes fit the Duchess of York — Addam's bundles include an infra-red receiver so they can be used up to 25 feet away. Not that you'd be able to see too much of the game from that distance but at least your mum won't trip on any wires draped

across the floor. Slow motion, auto-fire, turbo and super-turbo speeds are included to keep up to date with the increasing demands for new games. For £49.99 you get two controllers, the transmitter and all of your gaming problems solved allowing you to really take control of the situation.



LOST: THREE VIKINGS...

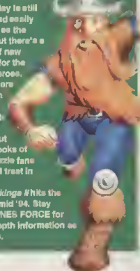
That's right, they've gone and done it again — those crazy Vikings are lost! You'd have thought that this time when they went to the shops they'd have at least taken a compass or left a trail of breadcrumbs, but no, oh no, not these bearded fools. They didn't even tell anyone where they were going!

Once more we follow the plight of these unfortunate Scandinavians. For those of you not familiar with the smash-hit original, there's Erik the Swift, he's the fast one. He's joined by Balgok the Fierce, the obligatory hard bloke, and Olaf the Stout — he's... well, he's the stout one. Not content with a huge-selling series game, they've come back to take it one step further. This time, the bungling adventurers are so lost they can't even find each other, which is where we join their quest to find each other and return home.

Gameplay is still as crisp and easily controlled as the original, but there's a plethora of new problems for the unlikely heroes.

Details are sketchy on the improvement over the original, but from the looks of things, purple fane have a real treat in store...

Lost Vikings II hits the streets in mid-'94. Stay tuned to SNES FORCE for more in-depth information as it happens.



ANIMÉ ACTION

FROM THE WORLD OF

RANMA 1/2



Welcome to the world of
RANMA 1/2 Explosive Free-Fight,
the hottest new blockbuster from the
phenomenon that is... **MANGA!**

You're about to set out on a breath-taking hyper-adventure.

The powerful, pixel-punching graphics
will make your head spin like a blow to
the temple. Featuring the most
outrageous cast of characters...

they'll leave you clucking on to your sanity by the
blackbelt of your judo suit!

RANMA 1/2 - A dozen animaniacs
causing mayhem in a mind-blowing,
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UP FRONT

Each issue Up Front brings you the ultimate guide to forthcoming releases. Updated every four weeks by our team of researchers, it's the most comprehensive software buying planner available. Remember though, release schedules are not set in stone, so on-sale dates may vary.

SNES

Final Fight 2	November
Quarterback Club	November
Rock 'n' Roll Racing	November
Super Putty	November
Tuff E Nuff	November
Dracule	November
Might & Magic II	November
Yoshi's Safari	November
Clayfighter	November
Dr Franken	December
Alfred Chicken	December
Brett Hull	December
Cool Spot	December
Wordtris	December
Might & Magic 3	December
Pink Panther	December
Plok	December
Robocop vs Terminator	December
Last Action Hero	Winter
Utopia	Winter
Sensibilia Soccer	January '94
NHL Hockey '94	January '94
Madden NFL '94	January '94
NBA Showdown	January '94
Turn And Burn	January '94
Super Bettletank 2	January '94
Super Empire	January '94
Impossible Mission	January '94
Lethal Enforcers	January '94
Mystical Ninja 2	February '94
Chaos Engine	February '94
Baseball	March '94
Magic Boy	First Quarter '94
Dragon	First Quarter '94
Young Merlin	First Quarter '94
Muham. Ali Boxing First Quarter '94	
World Cup Striker	First Quarter '94
Star Trek	Mid '94
Last Vikings 2	Mid '94
Power Slide	Mid '94
Mr Tough	Late '94
Peaky Blinder	Late '94

DR. FRANKEN

Producer Elite
Available December
Status Official UK release

Let's talk frank... Dr. Franken to be precise. Elite's latest prodigy has enjoyed a hearty stir on the Game Boy for such a larger-than-life monster the restricting size has brought him to the seemingly limitless machine of the SNES. The *Adventures Of Dr. Franken* promises everything the Gameboy had to offer and one beast of a lot more.

Though he has the face of a stapled cabbage Franky has found himself a girlfriend, Blissy. With their love blossoming as much as a pair of monsters their kins, the two decide to go on holiday. But Blissy realises she hasn't a passport and so is unable to leave for their destination, New York. Does Franky fill in a passport application form at the local post office? Uh-uh, he dismantles Blissy and posts her to

America. Thanks to the dooziness of the Transylvanian postal service, bits of Blissy end up all over the world so he'll be little brains embarks on a globe's journey to recover his girlfriend's parts (which bits would he look for first, we wonder?). Sporting 20 homogenous levels and 40 enemy species, the eight-meal cut will be haunting alone just in time for Christmas and for the lowdown watch out for our forthcoming review — you know it makes Franken-sense.



Each time Franky loses a life his head swells to giant proportions and he sticks his tongue out — strange!

EMPIRE'S SOCCER

Producer Empire
Available March
Status Official UK release

Just when the SNES seemed to be settling down after the football games invasion of recent months, another ball-related fiesta is set to shake up the market. *Empire's Soccer* includes all the flashy techniques you'd expect — banana kicks, aerial shots, barges, after-touch and a realistic feature which sounds nothing short of revolutionary — 'fantastic ball control' allowing you to curve the ball and land it



Empire Soccer scoring on the six in early '94.

on a sixpence!'. What expenses are doing in a football game we've no idea but it sounds good. Plus there are leagues, knockout competitions and the old referees and their killoying cards. Is this the one to rival *Sensible Soccer*? Take a trip to the terraces in our forthcoming review.

THE MEGA MAGIC OF DISNEY

Oh the wonderful world of Disney! Cartoons, kids films, dwindling theme parks with underpaid staff stuffed into ally costumes! It's just so innocent and richly sweet. Now, from the pens that spawn millions of laughing acts and dancing rabbits come the latest box office smash — Aladdin.

Just a plain old Arabian child slung into an adventure of thrills and spills in the easiest way possible. Shakes in cinema jugs, outsize-slaying thugs and all the stunning detail expected from a Disney masterpiece. Industry giant Capcom (known throughout the world for the stunning *Street Fighter* series) have clothed each cartoon-esque stage with beautiful colours and the characters are so breathtaking it's like your jaw fell wide open in disbelief, your teeth fell out as a consequence and a month in the dental surgery as a result — it looks that good. And it's riding

carpets wasn't enough, Capcom are also drawing back the veil of the new hero Mega Man for his new debut *Mega Man X*.

Set in the robot-controlled 21st century it's up to our super hero Mega Man, aided by two of the RoboPolice's best officers RX and RY, to restore peace and save humanity. To aid him in his quest he's been given extra speed, weapon strength and in all-new head-on smacks. Sounds like a weighty advantage but when you're up against a planet full of robo-souls it's the bare essentials.

So this Christmas keep your eyes peeled for *Aladdin* and *Mega Man X* — a dynamic duo indeed and two Capcom games destined to uphold their reputation as one of the finest software companies the world.



V
I
C
T

TIMESLIP



An alien force have slipped back
in time, to conquer Earth

Only one man can save the world
before it's too late

Don't let Time Slip you by,
take aim now!



VIC TOKAI

SUPER NINTENDO.

DESERT FIGHTER FOR JANUARY

System 3 are preparing to bolster their armoury of 1993 titles this Christmas with two new releases, *Super Q*bert* and *Desert Fighter*.

Latest in the series of puzzles starring that lovable monopod Q*bert, *Super Q*bert* is a conversion of the hit arcade machine from years

gone by. For those unfamiliar with the game, it's 16 levels of 3D frustration entailing hopping around a number of squares, changing their colour as you go. The level is finished when all squares have been changed and Q*bert has reached his Target Base, after retooling such surreal subjects as hamburgers and gnashing teeth along with the blazingly mundane flaps and boxes. Q*bert's enemies include snakes, ghouls, bouncing bats, deadly drain pipes and hopping mad frogs, and are all hell-bent on knocking him from the 3D landscape.

From the wild world of puzzles to the chaotic, commercialised carnage of the Gulf War in *Desert Fighter*, an isometric perspective war aim going already down a storm in Japan. System 3 are boasting C1K-style news updates incorporating digitised video sequences 'as realistic as those shown during the Gulf War' and a choice of dozens of dangerous desert campaigns. Hardware featured includes the A10



Preliminary reports from Japan suggest that *Desert Fighter* is going to be even bigger than *Desert Strike*.

Tank Buster and Tornado aircraft controlled from a high-tech command center, striving to destroy the enemy's SCUD missiles, tanks, fuel convoys, SAM radar sites and their secret police headquarters in Baghdad.

*Super Q*bert* is out in November with a price tag of £44.99, while *Desert Fighter* lands in January. For up-to-the-minute puzzle-packed, gun-totin' reviews, SNES FORCE out-thinks and out-guns them all.



An Arcade hit back in the early 80s, Q*bert finally rears his odd-shaped head on the SNES.

SFII MANGA MOVIE — IT'S OFFICIAL!

Late August saw the Japanese *Street Fighter II Turbo* championships held at the Kokugikan — The Hall of Sumo, which was decked out for the occasion with gigantic Capcom and SFII character banners (all except for Honda, whose face paint is seen as disrespectful to the Japanese national sport). Top officials from Capcom's Japanese and American divisions were in attendance as the tournament's 6,000 entrants gathered for a 9:30 am start. Half of these were regional champions decided by heats earlier this year, the others having been selected randomly from entries by mail. Surprisingly, both last year's champion (a Dhalsim user) and the runner-up were knocked out before the final when Takahiro Nakano's Sagat was victorious over Akihiko Kitemura's Ryu, winning him a SFII denim jacket, mountain bike and trophy (presented by Capcom Japan's president Kenzo Tsujimoto).

Announced after the tournament was the forthcoming *Street Fighter II* anime movie (to us Westerners). The film features all the original *Turbo* characters plus the arcade *Super SFII*'s four new ones. Producer Kanichirō Imai is also working with Hollywood's Edward Pressman on the live-action counterpart along with director Steve DeSouze (scriptwriter of the *Die Hard* series), and although the plot is a closely guarded secret it has been confirmed that it revolves around Ryu's feud with Bison, who is genetically engineering the perfect World Warrior.

In the meantime, *Super Street Fighter II* (the sequel to *Street Fighter II*) continues to take the country's arcades by storm raking in massive queues of people — and profits. The four additional characters have rakilled new life into a game that was beginning to get a little bit, dare we say it, tiresome. Now all talk is cantering on the possibility of a console conversion. There's been no confirmation as yet from Capcom but it'd be a fair bet that while you're reading this a programming team in the USA are busy working on a translation right now — well there's no harm in wishing! When more news of these exciting developments breaks, read it in SNES FORCE first.

ABSOLUTE COMBAT SIMS!

Absolute Entertainment and Electronic Arts have announced two new combat simulations for January, to be released through their joint affiliated label branch.

Super BattleTank 2 follows hot on the smoking heels of its predecessor, with four times the memory, twice the action and twice the challenge. The player controls the US M1A2 tank from a realistic cockpit view of enemy terrain, interleaved with full-motion video sequences of enemy acquisition and destruction. New features include a gunner's eye-view section where you wield a Phalanx high-speed machine gun at enemy T-72 tanks, M1-25 HIND choppers and US Air Force reinforcement sequences featuring F-15s bombing the combat area and taking counter measures against enemy heat-seeking missiles. The 16-meg cart also boasts animated refuelling and rearming sequences with SCUD and PATRIOT missile launches, for an estimated £44.99.

Turn And Burn: No Fly Zone is set for a simultaneous release at an identical price, a US Navy F-14D Tomcat airborne combat sim. EA promise fully rotating Mode 7 horizons and an arsenal of weaponry including 50mm front-mounted machine guns, AIM-9 Sidewinder infra-red missiles and AIM-54 Phoenix radar guided missiles. In addition to day and night sequences and missions, T&B also incorporates animated ejection sequences and nose-mounted camera shots of full-motion video, all stuffed into 16 Megs. Both games are expected in January '94, so for a jet-filled, SCUD packed first look, you know where to come — SNES FORCE.



Super Battle Tank: a thinking man's war sim.

MEGA-LO-MANIA

Are you Power crazy enough to take on the ultimate challenges of MEGA-LO-MANIA? A new planet has been born and lacks only a leader. You must face three conniving opponents and lead your race through the ages. To be successful you must mine, invent weapons, build fortress and above all fight.

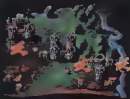
Move through the epochs and prepare for the final conflict the Mother of all battles The Conflict at the End of Time.

88% SNES FORCE "Incredibly addictive" Excellent strategy "engrossing" "Heartlessly brilliant"

DESIGNED BY
IMAGINEER



SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM
PAL VERSION



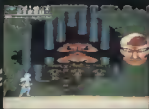
RUN SABRE

Cyborg warrior, you are on Run Sabre mission. Take a friend if you can on your perilous journey hack through the jungles, battle underground, across the orient and in the air. Fighting the mutant armies of Dr. Bruford every inch of the way. Finally you come face to face with the evil and all powerful doctor himself. Your lethal weapons and specially designed powers will hopefully lead to ultimate victory. You are the Earths last hope.

DESIGNED BY
IMAGINEER



SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM
PAL VERSION



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NINJA WARRIORS

Producer Taito
Available January
Status Japanese release

The classic arcade coin-op comes to this Nintendo 16-bit. Don't worry, it's not a cruddy translation of the dual screen slash-and-walk like the panned Mega-CD version — this is entirely original.

Aside from the single-screen format, the gameplay is virtually identical to the arcade original. One big difference is the addition of a third

character, Kamaitachi, a robot with T-800 qualities, to go with the burly Ninja and the hopelessly bodeous Kuniochi (can't tell, she looks like she's on a sabbatical in Iran being fully bundled except for an eye and golden locks). Each of the characters has their own weapon. The burly Ninja is a master of nunchucks while the speedy but weak Kuniochi is deadly with a kunai sword. Kamaitachi is a powerful robot that has wicked scythes for arms. These can be extended on a chain for striking enemies at a safe distance.

It's too bad, but the arcade version's two-player option has been dropped. Then again, it probably would have been impossible to use the impressively large characters otherwise. If you're looking for serious chop-sooky, it's right here.

RUSHING BEAT 3

Producer Jaleco
Available December
Status Japanese release

Here's the third installment in the popular side-scrolling walk-and-beat-the-bejabsers-out-of-the-bad-guys series from Jaleco (known as *Brawl Brothers* on SNES).

Players can go solo or as a duo with a trusted partner. The game starts with a choice of four characters, three meaty dudes including a bazooka-toting mohawk head and a dashing, flat-footed young girl. Depending on the character(s) chosen, the story unfolds in different ways, although the ultimate goal is to destroy a sinister corporation creating human monsters using a genetically mutating drug. As the game progresses, players are confronted with forked paths and other hard choices. These can alter the flow of the story, and not necessarily for the good. In certain scenarios, you can pick up new characters on the way, including some very familiar faces.

The sprites are large and well animated.

Aids from the usual punching, kicking, throwing and so on, each character has an impressive "terminator skill" that pretty well wipes out all enemies save for bosses. The mohawk-head soldier, Kythring, can fire his bazooka after charging it for a couple of seconds.

As a bonus, there's also a four player free-for-all mode which lets up to four players go head-to-head against each other by using a multi-tap link. Even when four players are tapped in, the action stays fast and crisp. Serious gamers may get into this more than the regular story mod.



High on thrills but low on originality — nothing much has changed in *Rushing Beat 3*.

UK CHART

1. — Mortal Kombat
2. ▼ Striker
3. — Super Mario Kart
4. ▼ Starwing
5. ▲ Super Star Wars
6. RE Batman Returns
7. ▼ Alien 3
8. ▲ Super Mario Paint
8. ▲ Pebble Beach Golf
10. ▼ Tiny Toons

US CHART

1. — StarFox
2. — Bubsy
3. — Royal Rumble
4. ▲ Shadowrun
5. ▼ Vegas Stakes
6. — The Last Vikings
7. ▼ Batman Returns
8. ▼ NBA Basketball
8. ▼ Street Fighter II
10. ▼ Fatal Fury

JAPANESE SFC CHART

1. — The Secret of Mana
2. ▲ J League Soccer Prime Goal
3. ▼ Super Mario All-Stars
4. ▼ 3rd Super Robot War
5. — Super Power League
6. ▲ Super Horse Racing
7. ▲ Crayon Shinchan
8. ▲ Street Fighter II Turbo
8. ▼ Sword World
10. ▼ All Japan Pro Wrestling

AMIGA'S NINJA IS TOO COOL TO ZOOL

Fed up with platform games? Bored to death of leaping obstacles and collecting icons? Tired of killing creatures for power-ups? Then go and do some gardening! Because the latest in the jumpshot category is the conversation of the computer classic

Zool. Hailing from the Nth Dimension (sounds like another Nintendo launch), Zool is an alien ninja trapped in a mad world of weird levels. There are seven different funds in all with four levels in each. From the sugary settings of Sweet World to the breath, outrageous rides in Fairground World, it'll be like the most daring of aliens to conquer the bizarre beasts and warped guidelines. Zool can run, spin, backflip and scale sheer cliffs without

blinking a burly beady eye and from what we've seen so far it looks better than the acclimated computer version, with improved graphics and sound too. Lots of things to collect, kill, collect some more and kill again will prove a mega hit with fans of the genre.

Remember that the alternative Ninja is one of few characters to achieve stardom on a computer format but the main market is a whole new kettle of time-scale. Mario's already got his gloves on and is prepared to go the distance for the title of Nintendo king. So don't miss our vibrant review next issue to find the true superstar — it's gonna be good.



The Amiga's answer to Mario brings his platform adventures to the snes but it's one game too many?

Go on holiday and don't take any luggage

Take a picture of your back

Give up your seat on the tube every day

Creon to your partner under a full moon

Get on a bus you've never been on before

Take a bath in milk

Say yes for a day

Dance in the front garden

Climb a tree

Do a jigsaw puzzle

Shave your head

Watch 'It's a wonderful life'

Put your name on a star

Get your hair cut

Feed the birds

Get on a bus you never got on before

Drink a glass of water

Visit an art gallery

Clean your ears

Dance in the rain

Write a poem

Dream for the day

Stop someone getting AIDS

Fast for a day

Feed someone else's meter

Visit New York

Learn to fly

Buy a hat

Carry a flower all day

Listen to Jazzie B's next show

Do a cartwheel

Use a fountain pen

Paint your toe-nails

Get up an hour earlier tomorrow

Tell someone your dreams

Walk home today

Take your granny to the movies

Do 100 press-ups

Walk on the grass

Feed the dog

Stop saying no for a whole week

Eat something you've never tried before

Make a million pounds

Invite your neighbour to tea

Put on a dress

Ride a Merry-go-round

Talk about God with a friend

Give your favourite possession away

Write to your MP

Say hello to a policeman

Wink at someone ugly

Memorise a Woody Allen joke

Make a wish

Send someone a telegram

Buy the next record you hear on Kiss

Tell the truth for a day

Learn to listen more

Put your sofa in the kitchen

Buy your boss a present

Scream

Sing a song at the top of your voice

Help a stranger with their shopping

Tell someone you appreciate what they do

Put the kettle on

Send an afternoon speculating on how to make a million

Go to a museum

Buy a friend your favourite book

Take up knitting

Forgive someone

Write a fairy-tale

Tune into Caesar tomorrow morning at 4am

Listen to Rodigan's next show, in the park

Do one thing to make the world a better place to live

Only boil as much water as you need

Photocopy this ad and get someone else to do it

Learn a new word every day

Do one thing to make the world a better place to live

Do one thing to make the world a better place to live

TUNE TO 100FM,
CLOSE YOUR EYES,
STICK A PIN IN THIS
PAGE AND DO IT.

Kiss 100

West Side Story

In the last eight years Westwood Studios has built a reputation as one of the USA's finest software developers. Their first SNES game in collaboration with Virgin, *Young Merlin*, is being heralded as the next *Zelda*. But just what exactly goes into making a Westwood game...

Based on the legendary wizard of Camelot long before he met King Arthur, *Young Merlin* is a *Zelda*-style adventure following the adventures of the edollescent magician as he seeks to escape from the realm of the treacherous Shadow King. It has taken many months to complete and the project has been an arduous though illuminating one.

At Westwood the process begins with an initial concept. In many games such as movie conversions the plot is already laid out but with an original game like *Young Merlin*, a story has to be dreamed up and characters created. This is predominantly a team effort allowing everyone from the producers and designers to the programmers and artists to have their say. Once a rough outline has been sketched the project then goes to the writers to flesh out the scenario by adding place names, characters and further refining the plot.

After many long nights of head scratching, the scenario the team came up with sees *Young Merlin* awakened from a nap by cries of help from a



This is where it all takes place — Luxurious Westwood Studios in the heart of Las Vegas.

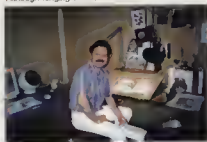
drowning maiden. Diving in after her he's quickly swept away by the current and falls unconscious. Awakening he finds himself in a land ravaged by the evil Shadow King and is faced with the unenviable task of finding the king's cave and overcoming him in a battle to the death. Along the way gems and magical items need to be found and used in the right places and puzzles must be solved.

At this stage key decisions have to be made. What size cart will be used? Will it be a one- or two-player game? What type of playing style? Will custom chips be used? Although many of a game's elements change frequently throughout the initial production period depending on budgets, time restraints and new ideas, right from the start Louis Castle and the YM team agreed their game should be a 16-Meg adventure aimed at the younger SNES owners and would feature a password system rather than the usual battery back-up for saving a player's progress. The reasoning for this was Louis' fear that the long life of big adventure games may lead to fill batteries — although the extra cost involved in buying battery-backed carts must have been a consideration.

Art attack

Next, the artists were called in. Despite massive investment in state-of-the-art computer technology, Westwood still use pencil artists to conceptualise characters and settings on paper.

Although longing to remain in touch with the artists



Conceptual artists sketch ideas on paper before passing them onto computer-aided designers.

direction of the project, Louis was finding he simply didn't have enough time to concentrate fully on VM and juggle all his other responsibilities so Joseph Hewitt was drafted in as Assistant Art director and left to handle all the game's background and maps.

Once the team are happy with the look of the game on paper then the artists leave with the writers and the programmers start getting involved. Barry Green and Milo Balkan were the guys given the task of bringing the designers' dreams to life and over the coming months had many a head-to-head argument with flamboyant designers to cram ever more features into the game. Barry and Milo see their



Barry Green remains silent on the question of a *Young Merlin* sequel.

function as 'no' men, desperately trying to bring the designers and producers down to earth. Louis was forever coming up with totally wild ideas for level bosses that sounded amazing in theory but just not possible to program for the SNES.

While many programmers prefer to work with a completely finished story, Barry helped Joseph design many of the game's later stages and the level bosses. Although this

was a little frustrating at times, it gave Milo and Barry a rare opportunity to have creative input into a game rather than working strictly to orders.

As the programmers busily working on code, upstairs in the art department the conceptual line drawings were being converted into computer graphics via a paint program — the specialty of computer artists.

Recreating the look and feel of a painting in computer graphics using pixels instead of brush strokes is as much an art form as the initial drawing but it's significant to note the departments are kept separate.

Interestingly enough, the conceptualists find it



E.M. Louise Sandoval slaves over a hot computer converting pencil sketches to electronic art.

much easier to come up with imaginative ideas working with traditional tools whereas many of the trained computer artists have been limited by the constraints of their machines and lack the sheer 'wild and westiness' of the free form artists who know no boundaries.

So while Westwood keep promising to train their conceptualists as computer artists, they realise they're of much more value working the 'old fashioned' way.

West wood boys

While the artists work on the look of *Young Merlin*, on the other side of the offices Frank Kiepack is in his studio working on the game's soundtrack. Using an IBM-based sequencer running the Visual Composer program, Frank is able to write and compose directly to the computer rather than 'translating' the soundtrack he plays on his keyboard to musical notation.

He uses the mix process of digitally connecting equipment and then, once he's happy with a track, converts it to suit a particular console. This



Complete with Dracula-style shades, Frank takes time out from composing to give us his rock star pose.

'customisation' is common when working for the SNES as although it's sonically superior to the Mega Drive, Frank finds their notes cut off very quickly so he often has to simulate effects such as staccato string sounds by overlapping notes.

Music for the masses

While Frank works on the creative music, next door Dwight and Paul are busy on the technical side. Surrounded with a microphone and masses of special effects racks and hi-tech computers, the audio guys, known as the misvends of Westwood, have the task of creating all the special effects and digitised samples in the game.

Anything from a wizard mumbling to magic dust floating in the breeze, all the game's sounds are made by these guys. The latest addition to their vast array of goatees is a new Super Nintendo emulator allowing them to hear exactly what an effect sounds like on a SNES so they can fine tune the sound to perfection.

Dwight and Paul are a lot happier working with the SNES than the Mega Drive as they feel Nintendo's console offers them more scope to get as many as possible of their sound effects in a game. The SNES designers thought about the problems of fitting multiple memory-hungry digitised samples into a cart and built in Data Compression saving valuable memory space. However, the side effect of this compression is that only a fixed amount of samples can be held in the SNES audio RAM at once which can be frustrating to the audio guys wanting to cram in masses of sounds.

This didn't stop Dwight and Paul pling on the music and special FX though. In *Young Merlin* there are four megs of sound (25% of the cart) which is more space than a lot of complete games — including *Super Mario World* — take up.

Data Compression also makes it tough to loop samples if it's not done perfectly a small click is heard as the sample repeats. The penalty for this click is the carte instant refusal by Nintendo of America — so it has to be right first time.

Meet Dwight, audio technician and part time rock 'n' roll legend.

Back upstairs in her palm tree-filled office which looks like scene 26 of *Jesus of Nazareth* — Westwood encourage all their employees to customise their own offices — Cindy works on

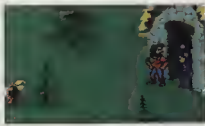
animation. It's crucial for the project's success that the game's characters move as smoothly and realistically as possible. Again using high-powered computers, Cindy creates the different frames of animation then builds them together creating a moving sequence in a similar style to that used by cartoon animators.

All this stage of the team are working on the project simultaneously. The great advantage of this is not only does it build a sense of team spirit but also if any problems arise it's only a short walk upstairs or across the building to another department. If the producer feels an element of the game isn't working, maybe a soundtrack or a particular level or puzzle, it can be changed there and then rather than having to send it 'out of house' to specialists.

Information overload

Back downstairs the programmers are wrestling with the problem of trying to fit all the information sent by all the different departments onto the finished cart. A

programmers. This way the testers can get a feel for the team and the game they're working with. The result of having testers 'in house' is that the guys with all the playing experience can comment directly to the programmers on what they like or



This scene originally took place inside the house... night and wrong with the game and changes can be made accordingly.

Although Westwood use their network to transfer the game's code, they still always make a real cart just to make sure the finished game actually works — they also have a co-ROM burner for making their own CDs for PC games.

Even now the process isn't finished. It's one thing having a bug-free game but will the public like it? To find out focus groups made up of game buyers of a target age group are brought in and their comments recorded and studied. At this point Barry, Milo and the rest of the team all back with fingers crossed and pray the public likes *Young Merlin*.

As predicted the response was excellent but one small incident left the programmers stunned. Barry and Milo had spent weeks constructing a minicave puzzle in the game's mine cart section. In the playtesting stage this was causing all kinds of problems taking many hours to complete. Given that *Young Merlin* was being marketed at the 10-18 age group there were concerns that this puzzle might be a little too tough so early in the game.

Barry and Milo were unsure whether to make the puzzle easier and eventually opted to wait and see what happened in the focus group tests. Imagine their surprise when Ronnie aged 12 breezed

through the section in ten minutes flat!

After the focus group tests are over and any last minute changes made, it's time to put together a mock-up cart and submit the game to Nintendo of America. Only if a game passes Nintendo's stringent tests is it awarded the illustrious seal of approval.

Many months have passed since the game's initial concept and thousands of dollars spent. To the *Young Merlin* team this project is more than just a game, it's become a way of life. Now their fate lies in the hands of a team of testers they've never met before out to hack their way to pieces. For the next few days none of the crew will sleep soundly. Did I get the data compression right? Should we have made that puzzle easier? You can judge for yourself in our exclusive review of Westwood's *Young Merlin* next issue.



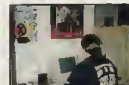
To the Young Merlin team this project is more than just a game, it's become a way of life.

16-meg cart sounds like a lot of space but when you lose a quarter of that to sound and another four meg on character animation, plus there are artists wanting lavish graphics, designers ranting for massive levels and producers pining for extra puzzles it's a real headache trying to jam all the elements in. Inevitably on all projects programmers can't do everything a producer asks and *Young Merlin* is no exception. Toward the end of the project memory space was so scarce that a scene between Merlin and a grumpy old man and his daughter which was scheduled to take place inside a intricately-detailed house, finally appears in the game outside the house. It's these kind of refinements that can easily delay a project and cause untold frustration.

Judgment day

Once the programmers have finally put together all the pieces it's time for judgment day — playtesting. Because Westwood have such a massive computer network and server system (a set up used to link the studios' various computer terminals allowing them to 'communicate' with each other) — currently 14 gigabytes but set to expand to between 50 and 60 gigabytes — the playtesting team can take the raw code straight off the network and test it in their offices downstairs for bugs and glitches. This ability to test games 'in-house' without the need to 'burn rooms' (the finished chips used inside a standard SNES cart) not only save masses of time and money but helps build the often fragile relationship between testing and production.

If a bug is found while testing it's simply a matter of walking across the hall to the



Young Merlin gets put through its paces in the playtesting dept.

Manual Labour

Have you ever stopped to think how many people are involved in making one Super Nintendo game? At most software companies hundreds of people toil for months, even years, on your favourite titles but at Electronic Arts the manual labour falls squarely on the shoulders of two young lads...

Ask someone to name the people behind a best-selling game like *Desert Strike* and they'll probably talk about programmers, artists and animators. Push them harder and they might mention musicians, package designers and playtesters. Give them all day and they'll probably never mention writers — and ask them to name a famous manual author and guaranteed they'll look at you as if you've gone mad. 'Manuals?' they gasp. 'Who reads them?' And they've got a very good point — who does write game manuals and more to the point does anybody ever read them?

The only way to find out was to go on the road and meet these authors, and where better to start than with **Nell Cook** and **Clive Downie** two of the most respected scribes in the business, the Electronic Arts writing team. But what would they look like? Anorexia with attitude? The truth in fact was much weirder.

SNES FORCE: Could you introduce yourselves and tell us any previous projects you've worked on?

NEIL: Believe it or not I'm actually only 25. My official title is Documentation Manager and I've worked on *Syndicate* (PC & Amiga), *FIFA International Soccer* (Sega), *Yegger Air Combat* (Mac), turned dozens of US manuals into English and written heaps of ad copy.

CLIVE: I'm a mere youngster having just turned 21. I've written for *Space Hulk* (PC & Amiga), *Desert Strike* (Amiga), *Lotus II* (Sega), *James Pond III* (Sega), loads of ad copy, pack copy and US manual rewrites.

SNES FORCE: How long have you been working on manuals and what do you do before?

NEIL: I've been producing EA manuals for 10 months now. Prior to this I did a stint on a music magazine and also worked as a copywriter for an advertising agency, as well as freelance features on sport, movies and games.

CLIVE: I've been supposedly working on manuals for 11 months. Beforehand I did a stint in the battleground known as Customer Service, before that I was a Computer Cabling Engineer (it's a whole new world under the desks of the nations office workers — bogey building stones abound) and before that I was a Cinema Manager.

SNES FORCE: Could you give us a run through of a typical day at the office? Is there such a thing as a typical day?

NEIL: Get in 9.50 (ish). Turn on Mac, make tea, eat Bran Flakes, read e-mail. Review Man Utd's latest Premier League performance, and wind-up supporters of whatever losers the mighty Reds have hammered recently (ie most of the office). Facing North we kneel toward Old Trafford and pray, using our Man Utd bath towels as prayer mats. Insult the Mac designers (they're all inbred and ugly) and then it's time for lunch. Play pinball for a couple of hours down the ale house, come back bleary-eyed and drink black coffee all afternoon. Go home about 6.00 (ish) when I've sobered up enough not to fall under the train.

CLIVE: Neil runs a very tight ship. As a manual under his strict and alcohol-soaked command I have absolutely no spare time — work, work, work. And then I wake up. Usually I examine the projects that are on the boil, wait for people to get back to me (they know who they are), type up any changes to copy, write some original wodge, go walkabout around the office to gain inspiration ('oh sorry, is this really the girls toilets????'), sit down, drink a Coke, write more, play some games — then when the end of the quarter comes, reap in the awards and praise of my colleagues.

SNES FORCE: How did you get into this type of work? What was the appeal? Were you a wordy type at school? What qualifications have you got for the job?

NEIL: I landed my job at EA having responded to an ad in *The Guardian*. They wanted an experienced wordsmith to work on manuals, ad copy and anything else that might come up in the course of the day. With my background writing for a music magazine and in advertising, I thought I'd be in with a shout. I've written on computer games, although not extensively, and managed to embellish my experience enough to convince them. Mugs. I did have the help of 'A' level English Lit and a degree in English and American Literature. At school I was always into creative writing (when I wasn't in the girls changing rooms). I was a bit sad really, wore short trousers even in the Sixth Form, had NHS binoculars and never washed my hair. I've changed a lot since then.

CLIVE: Having worked with EA for just over a year, I was lucky enough to be offered the writers position (kind of hunched and twisted). I'd always looked myself as a bit of a wordsmith but never thought seriously about it. As opposed to Neil, I was not a sad pupil at school. In English classes I displayed enough mastery of prose to get by, preferring to leave scandal behind me in a mad dash down the road to a friend's house where an afternoon with the lads would await. Nevertheless, I succeeded in obtaining an English Literature 'A' level — a meaningless piece of paper that I feel is of great benefit to my writing skills.

SNES FORCE: What do you like best (and worst) about working for EA?

NEIL: EA is by far the most satisfying experience of my working life (and I'm not just saying that in hope of a pay rise). It's a very young and lively company, we all get along most of the time and I got the opportunity to write all day and get paid for it. The only complaint is that there are two cubicles in the downstairs lavatory at EA, but only one has a bog brush. So your reduced to making the tricky choice between leaving the lavatory in a god-awful state, or nipping into the next cubicle for the brush with your pants around your ankles. Getting caught between these two stools can be very embarrassing.

CLIVE: The thing (aaaaaaahhhhh) I like most about working here is the complete lack of 'work lethargy'. I have in the mornings when getting up. Instead of thinking I'm going to work I always feel I'm off to see some friends for the day, the fact they live in

the same place all the time hasn't clicked yet. The worst aspect of EA is the area where we're situated - if I ever catch the ?????? who stole my bike - they know who they are.

SNES FORCE: A lot of readers might not be aware of the process of developing a game. Could you take us through the flow of a typical project from inception to complete cart and explain how and when you get involved.

NEIL: We don't really get in on the act until there's some software we can play, familiarise ourselves with and begin to document. Prior to that, dev crew have had concept, story and script approved to the point where work can actually begin on the software. Our manual then keeps with the software as it goes through the various development stages. When the game's complete, Quality Assurance makes sure that the software works bug free and that the manual does its job of actually explaining how to play. So when it has all been approved, we hand the manual over to the Mac designers to lay out, while the production people make sure 50,000 (or however many) carts get made and that the manual and pack get printed as they've been designed. Phew.

SNES FORCE: We don't want to sound cynical but after buying a game isn't it fair to say the vast majority of people just hurl the packaging to one side and get stuck in? Do you ever feel like screaming — like you've maybe spent months pouring your soul into a project and nobody likes any notice?

NEIL: No, not at all. To get the most from the game, eventually they're gonna have to turn to the manual. So long as I feel I've done my job well that's my main source of satisfaction, plus the feedback I get from those who do read the manual.

CLIVE: The majority of manuals get read — some time. Be it on the toilet, in bed, on the bus. My main wish is that players read the manual for basic control info, get hooked on the snappy prose and read it cover to cover and make their life better. Ah.

SNES FORCE: So how important is a good manual? Can the manual make a difference to a game?

NEIL: A good manual is integral. Not only does it add value to the game, but it explains elements of the game which the player would be wholly ignorant of without the manual. There's no point in a game designer labouring to produce an excellent game if the end user then can't play it, or misses out on some of the more interesting facets of it.

SNES FORCE: What are the qualities that go into making a good manual? What are you trying to achieve?

NEIL: A good manual needs to explain how to play the game accurately and concisely, which also fleshes out the background where possible. For example, in the Syndicate manual I made up 7 rival Syndicates that you'd have to go up against. I like that kind of thing — it gives me the chance to let it rip a little.

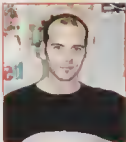
CLIVE: A manual must place the player in the world the game is set in. After reading it the player must be able to visualise the environment outside of the graphics appearing on screen, creating a more vivid gaming experience. Where appropriate, a manual must be able to make the reader laugh — witicism and snide sarcasm are rife in a number of mine and Neil's finer works.

SNES FORCE: How long do you spend on a project?

NEIL: These depends entirely on how long the software takes to perfect. We leave the manual alone having taken it to a certain point and wait for the next stage of development. Sometimes this can be a matter of days, sometimes months. It all depends.

SNES FORCE: It must be very important for you to get close to the games. How long do you spend playing games and working with dev guys?

NEIL: We work pretty closely with the dev guys especially early on when they need to explain to us what the game's about and how to play it. Then we go away and bawber over the manual for a while, but make enquiries whenever we're not sure how something works, and keep playing the game to make certain what the manual says is right. In the final stages the dev guys get a copy of the manual, nip it to shreds, plit it up in the bag and leave off a sheet to wipe their behinds, and tell us what a lousy,



NEIL COOK.

Age 25 **Documentation Manager** Worked on Syndicate PC & Amiga, FIFA International Soccer Sega, Yeager Air Combat Mac, turned dozens of US manuals into English and written heaps of ad copy

Favourite game:

PGA Tour Golf II — excellent gameplay, wholly addictive, but don't play skins for cash, kids

Favourite book:

One Hundred Years Of Solitude, Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Favourite manual:

My Syndicate manual. Nuff said

Last rented video:

Batly Blue (Version Integrate). Three hours of Beatrice O'Leary in the buff — what more could a young man want?

Last CD bought:

New Order, Republic



CLIVE DOWNE

Age 21 **Writer** Worked on Space Hulk PC & Amiga, Desert Strike Amiga, Lotus II Sega, James Pond III Sega, loads of ad copy, pack copy and US manuals rewrites

Favourite game:

Naked Twister, but I've unavalued *Super Star Wars*, *PGA II*, *John Madden '94*

Favourite book:

The Moon's a Balloon, David Niven

Favourite manual:

Chuck Yeager's Air Combat. Wordy words by the one and only Tungsten Luoto

Last film seen:

In The Line Of Fire, wrinkly Clint action.

Last CD bought:

The Doors, *Strange Days*

inaccurate job we've done. Sometimes

CLIVE: Ditto

SNES FORCE: What about if a project comes in from the States? Does the manual need re-writing? Any funny examples of blatant Americanisms or interesting differences between UK and US manuals?

NEIL: They generally need some work, mainly because they're so much longer than ours can afford to be. Manuals produced over here all need to be translated into upretn European languages, so we hack out great chunks of the US manuals just so that it fits the box when there's 8 languages instead of one. I tend to remove every third word, or words beginning with the letter S — it's much easier than thinking about it.

CLIVE: The biggest problem with US manuals is the sheer number of styles they use in their documents. When writing on a Mac it's possible to custom build titles and text types — usually a manual contains 5 or 6. But not the US docs, oh no. For some unknown reason they delight in making as many styles as possible, the bigger the better — maybe it's some recessive Texan gene. Where it comes to reducing the number (to make the designers' jobs easier), that's when the headaches and obsessions start.

SNES FORCE: Do you do any plot development work?

NEIL: I've been involved in making up background stories, but this is something I'd like to do more of in the future.

CLIVE: At the moment I'm working on our development guys (two headed green skinned individuals) on a script for a game on the 3DO system — that's all the info you're getting

SNES FORCE: What's the most rewarding thing about work?

NEIL: It's got to be the moment when the finished manual is placed in your hands, printed and entirely finished. It's the same for ads, brochures, and anything else I write really. Not until it's printed does it seem entirely real, and when I see the finished article that's when I get the biggest buzz. Of course, positive feedback's nice too.

CLIVE: Colleagues coming up to me and saying what a good job I've done. The gnome-headed awards that sit on my desk, cheekily smiling at me all day. Reading a manual and thinking that sounds great. A cheese and ham toastie at lunchtime

SNES FORCE: If you could write a manual for any game (real or fantasy) what would you choose and why?

NEIL: Tricky. I suppose I've just written my ideal manual for FIFA International Soccer. I love football and this gave me the chance to play the best soccer game the Mega Drive has ever seen for hours on end, then shoe horn phrases like 'an early bath' and 'suck as a parrot' into the manual.

CLIVE: Double tricky. A totally original game format that nobody has produced so I could command any fee I like

SNES FORCE: Clive, Does Neil's singing annoy you? Neil, has Clive got any really disgusting habits?

NEIL: Clive picks his nose, rolls the bogies then wipes them under the desk where they go all crusty and herd. He then eats them. Urgh.

CLIVE: Firstly Neil is a compulsive liar. As some wise geezer once said — 'Man cannot live on boogers alone' — I am sympathetic to this maxim and can truly say I've never grazed upon my nasal nourishment. Neil's singing is bearable. It's his constant psychological probing that gets to me — and he's always wrong.

NEIL: I'd just like to add that Clive is only annoyed by the fact that my psychological insights into his character are always spot on.

SNES FORCE: Anything you'd like to say before we finish?

CLIVE: I fear this is another of Neil's very wrong observations on his fellow humans.

NEIL: Chris Rice has ...

SNES FORCE: Err... I think that wraps it up guys. Thanks for your time and we look forward to a s&s conversion of FIFA Soccer in the near future. Respect due to all the guys at EA and our deepest sympathies to Clive for having to put up with Neil

Sensible Shoot out

Soccer.
The most popular sport in the world. Multi-million pound industry, creating heroes for millions of hopefuls. Then, in the middle of the season, in the middle of Home Economics, up pops Sony's *Sensible Soccer* — and the crowd go wild...

There's only one way to really test a game and that's to get out and meet the people who really count — YOU, the public. So when Sony's affluence-baited but soccer-challenged top PR star Caroline Slokes asked SNES *FORCE* for an advance opinion on their eagerly-awaited conversion of the legendary football sim *Sensible Soccer*, we all agreed it would be even better to find out what the town's games buyers thought.

So with the preproduction cart clasped lovingly between sweaty palms we trooped off to the local comprehensive for the ultimate *Sensible Soccer* challenge. Could the professionals overcome the exuberance of youth or would we be publicly humiliated by a bunch of renegade part timers? Soccer pundits were drawing comparisons with the



Tension mounts in the warm up rounds with three sendings off — and it's meant to be a friendly game!

England vs San Marino match but no-one was really sure whether it was an insult or a compliment. In the end we put the snide remarks down to some misguided form of psychological mind game and got on with the job at hand — deluging the SNES *FORCE* honour.

After an early morning fitness test the SNES *FORCE* team was looking severely ragged. Our star striker, Simon, was preaching hard for the national games championships and couldn't be (more) disturbed. A bedraggled Blundford was confined to the office on the grounds he might scare the mere sensitive schoolgoers. Charlie was still recovering from another hideous mountain bike injury. Chrissy H, the devil himself, was tied up with... well, with rope. And Will declined on grounds of schoolgirl fetish.

That left the grand old men of football Chris Rice as the lone defender of the magazine's gleaming reputation. Luckily, Jon Hare one of *Sensible*'s programmers was on hand to lend a helpful boot — God knows we needed him.

The roar as we stroled into the classroom was



Thomas Scott (11)
Lost 0-2 to Chris
'Brilliant 90%'



Shaun Johnson (11)
Drew 1-1 with Chris
'Good. Not as easy to control as the Amiga version and I think it's a lot slower 88%'



Adam Marsh (11)
Lost 1-0 to Chris
'Good but a bit slow 78%'



Henry Barton (11)
Drew 1-1
'87%. I love it'

more akin to an afternoon on The Kop than second period in the Home Economics room. Cheers galore and masses of expectant faces. Caroline made sure Chris didn't do a runner, while Jon explained the rules, which didn't take long, as many of the budding Gazzas had played the Amiga version. The quest was on to find the *Sensible Soccer* champ. Caroline was waving *Last Action Hero* and *Dracula* CD soundtracks in the air — just a selection of the prizes the Sensible Cup winner would claim. Bad move.

Chris reigned as messes of eager participants jumped at the opportunity to kick Chris and Jon's hide, literally launching themselves across the room in a frenzy of soccer hysteria. Caroline did her best to cheer on her champions but was instantly cautioned by Senior House Tutor Mr Weaver and dismissed into the corner with her hands on her

HARE-RAISING!

Sensible Soccer started life on the Amiga just over two years ago. Jon and his partner at Sensible Software, Chris Yates came up with the idea. Jon had played *Kick Off* and wanted a game with improved gameplay and loads of new features. They'd decided their footy sim had to be instinctive — you had to want to pick up the game, get into it straight away, and, after several months play, still find new



Jon Hare, one of *Sensible Soccer*'s programmers, tries to bribe his way through to the final.

features and pick up new skills. 'We gave the game a delicately balanced difficulty curve,' Chris Yates told me. 'The Amiga game took around eight months to programme. I'd say the Sega game took about the same time. For the SNES version we included difficulty levels, star players each with their own special shots, we enhanced the goal keepers, made the menus less boring and changed the dimensions of the pitch a little. You get a smaller view of the pitch, so the game appears to run faster, but it's actually the same speed as the Amiga version.'



William Jones (12)
Lost 2-0
'55% Better than
the beginner
mode.'



Sara Randall (12)
Lost 4-0
'Good. Quite slow for
beginners though.
85%'



Gareth Jackson (13)
Lost 3-0
'Great game. I like
the good selection of
teams and the
music. 87%'



Steven Frost (12)
Lost 1-0
'Good graphics and
gameplay although it
takes a while to get
used to if you
usually use a
joytuck.' 80%



head — it's amazing what depths teachers will stoop to to win a couple of CDs. But justice prevailed and the school's dirty tricks backed, the sight of Ms Stokes sobbing merely spurring Chris and Jon to greater heights

The Marsh reality

The atmosphere was electric as the first contender, Adam Marsh took his seat and prepared to take on Chris. 'It's got to be Manchester for me,' shouted the Mancunian under. His pedigree didn't appear to



The action heats up as our plucky editor defends the SNES FORCE honour. Close your mouth Ricey!

bother 13-year-old Adam though, with his eyes fixed firmly on the screen, he chose Inter Milan and proclaimed defiantly, 'I'm gonna thrash him!' Chris looked on nervously, momentarily stopping biting his nails to seek Hit Man Hare the best tactics, 'Play

Chris, playing as Manchester, in full flight against young hopeful Adam Marsh.



Gareth Hughes (12)
Drew 3-3
'Good graphics and
gameplay although it
takes a while to get
used to if you
usually use a
joytuck. I usually
play the Amiga or
Megadrive version
but this is just as
good if not slightly
better.' 87%



dirty,' the pony-tailed programmer smiled with the Devil's eyes, 'but beware, it's easy to get sent off.' Chris took note. After deciding on three minutes 'real time' each way the game kicked off and Chris

Surrounded by angry losers, Sensible's Jon Hare makes a break for the nearest exit.

started kicking. Numerous crunching tackles and a handful of yellow cards later the half-time whistle sounded and both teams sat about changing tactics and formations for a second-half showdown

All remained close until Chris picked up a loose ball just outside his own penalty area, looked up and sent a 35-yard pass hurtling downfield over the Milan midfield, took it on the run, nutmegged two defenders and launched a shot into the top corner. The spawny Mancunian had done it again and he proceeded to taunt his opponent, then pite his entire team into defence. Despite a valiant attempt Adam couldn't penetrate the cast iron defence and, at the end of 90 minutes, the score remained Manchester 1 Inter Milan 0. What better way to start the tournament than on a winning note — no matter how fluky!

After the match, Adam gave his comments on the game. 'It's pretty good. The beginner mode's a little slow. If it'd been an expert I'd have thrashed him.' That's what they all say!

Sensible schooling

On the other side of the room the Mega Machines crew were taking a beating from all corners, meanwhile Chris and Jon — Manchester and Norwich respectively — proceeded to carve through the opposition. All that stood between them and a perfect record was the 12-year-old Welsh wizard William Jones. Adopting an attacking 2-3-5 formation the young pretender peppered the Manchester goal with long shots only to be caught twice on the break with two quick goals — the Mancunian's finishing was deadly. Despite continued attacking, William couldn't breach the Manchester sweeper system and no further score was added before the final whistle blew. Although distraught by his performance, the defeated finalist was full of praise for the game. 'It's much better than any Mega Drive Football game' he purred. 'The beginner mode is excellent. And how would he rate Sensible Soccer?' 'At least 85%, probably a lot more. If I'd won I would have been



Goalmouth scramble! Manchester hit the post with only two minutes gone in the first half.

90%.' With that, Caroline proceeded to attack Chris for not letting him win and was immediately sent back into the corner by Mr Weaver — some people never learn!

As the lunch bell rang and the last few players exchanged Sony T-Shirts and told increasingly unbelievable stories about how they 'only missed by this much', an air of normality slowly returned to the school. A lot of hearts were broken and ego denied along the way but in the end there was only one winner — Sensible Soccer. The only question remained was what to do with the afternoon. Right on cue Jon popped up 'back to the office for a Sensible challenge?' And with that we were off to the car for a return match 'Trin Manchester' 'Trin Norwich'

Do you think we should tell Caroline we're leaving? We all looked at each other and simultaneously laughed 'Nah!'

Wonder if she's still there...?

Senseless

The Sensible Soccer C

Hotly tipped to be the best football game this side of Wembley stadium the SNES FORCE layabouts decided to stage their very own *Sensible Soccer* tournament to see how good it really played (and take a day off in the process)...

The players endured rigorous training sessions, from dawn to dusk they practised with all their heart. Pain, tears, it didn't matter to this team. Now the real test had arrived, a time to see if all the hard work would pay off. So England travelled to Holland to find out and at the same time SNES FORCE got off their lady butts and kicked all of two metres to the SNES to compete in the *Sensible Soccer* challenge. From the *Sensible* stable arrived Jon Hare, programmer of the latest footy landings and all-round gaming superstar who decided to show the FORCEs exactly how the game was played. To double the chance of a SNES FORCE victory the cunning crew entered Simon Hill, renowned pool of games, and Chris Hayward, renowned of nothing significant. Playing a *Sensible* cup, the two went at it hammer and tongs (and tongues, if the language was anything to go by).



There's only one Chrissy Hayward, one Chrissy Maay... and the losing sides express their joy for his victory.

By half-time Simon had failed to live up to everyone's expectations by consistently losing to the other teams as well as Jon Hare who had predicted a clean victory for his good self. That left the bewildered Hayward at the top of the league and after dominating the final matches he emerged the winner. Jon left the premises with his prophesies shattered and Simon entered a state of sulk demanding he had been 'robbed' and vowed to claim the title he so richly deserved — *Sensible Soccer* champ. By now the rest of SNES FORCE had taken an interest in the competition and after comments that each could out-do the others at the game it was mutually agreed that another tournament be held, much to the delight of the tuning Simon. Prizes were at stake, glory was at stake, Jon Bruford was gnawing a steak he was so excited. So the next day, the challenge of challenges was staged.

The air was filled with tension as the six competitors entered the office primed and ready for the carnage to begin. With all six taking part plus two computer teams it was a big cup knockout where only the best could survive.

After reigning champ Hayward defeated the first computer team in the first match, resident sports enthusiasts Will Evans took to the field in a bid to wipe the pitch with the revenge-driven Simon. The opening minutes saw several goals thrashed past Will's defense but undeterred he managed to figure



The crowd root for Evans the underdog but against the jeers Simon takes the lead (around Will's neck).



Who needs victories anyway? Content with a superb goal Will bows out of the competition.

out which the kick button was and related with a goal of his own (or was it an own goal?). Unfortunately, Will's efforts were short-lived — moments later Simon scored another. The result — Will 1, Simon 1 heck of a lot.

If there was ever a grudge to be settled it was the showdown between Jon and Charlie. Bruford trotted onto the field full of confidence yet was quickly brought down to size via Charlie's impeccable talent for verbal abuse.



The dark destroyer verses the breathalyser in a pre-match confrontation.

After many stand-offs, screams of slanging matches, punching and the odd comment about each other's mother the pair locked off another slanging match. Hours later the verdict was decided that Bruford had won by a final degrading remark in the closing seconds of the argument. Charlie added insult to injury (in fact he added two insults) and received a red card as a consequence. With that, the football began. Moments later the SNES FORCE designer destroyed the shambles that was Jon's defense and continued to slaughter the squat dwarfen descendant with a volley of shots any premier manager would be proud of.

As the match drew to a conclusion Jon did sink to the rear of the stadium in anticipation of the humiliation he was about to receive. Slaughtered in

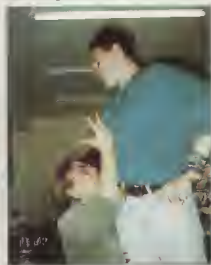


Acting ref. Will Noli steps in to clear the argumentative air.

Things

challenge

the match, he clamoured for Chubb to forgive his earlier outbursts of rage. Of course anyone pitiful enough to beg forgiveness receives the obvious... another barrage of verbal abuse.



Bruford's technical wizardry reaches an all time low as Charlie wins the match (N.B. Bruford's actual size).

Once the building was restored to some form of normality it was time for SNES FORCE's gallant leader Chris Rice to tackle the remaining computer team. Surely a man in his position couldn't lose to a doom-doomed, automated opponent? Surely he could easily defeat the amateur Ukraine side with his football excellence? Surely... as it turned out the Editor's hopes of claiming the championship were dashed.



As the Ukraine go into the lead SF's Ed has little choice but to cower behind his forearm.

Only seconds into the first half the Ukraine slipped in an astonishing goal much to the horror of Chris who still dumbfounded by the realisation, fell victim to another seconds later 2-0 down, Chris still had time to make a comeback or, at least, kiss goodbye to the tournament with a small amount of pride intact.

Fortunately the Gods of Tranmere were on his side and he managed to welly the ball into the opposition's net. Not that it mattered, 90 minutes soon elapsed leaving Chris with no consolation and a computer team that made it through to the semi-finals.



Chris relishes a late goal as finger mouse looks on from afar.

Leaving three gutted teams by the wayside, the remainder of the SNES FORCE team continued their individual quests for glory. The semi-finals pitched Chris Hayward against Charlie, and Simon against the Ukraine. Simon's match was no walkover, this computer team that caused upset against Mr. Rice was surprisingly good and refused to go out without a slurry fight. But go out it did because after several unfortunate near-misses (fortunate for Simon) Ukraine were sent packing after being beaten 3-1.



A true artist at work. Or is it just Will making a trophy?

With both computer teams out, the final depended on the outcome of Hayward vs Chubb.

It was an historical match in which the pair managed to collect more red cards between them than Vinny Jones could ever dream. With the red holding up yellow cards, red cards, get well cards it was no surprise that by the second half Chris's side was reduced to nine men. Still in control of a full squad, Charlie took advantage of the lack of opposition and retied in goal after goal. Yet just when victory seemed on the horizon, the champ turned the tables (yes! right over!) and stormed into the lead. As the final whistle blew, a disappointed Charlie trailed off in misery leaving Chris, arms raised, to contemplate his success and prepare for the final — the *Sensible Soccer* rematch.



Simon affected by nerves? Puh, he's as calm as calm can be.

The ultimate, the pinnacle, the highlight of the event and nobody thought it would end in another Hill vs. Hayward conflict (people were getting bored for starters). Hell-bent on proving that he was the real champion, Simon confidently picked up the joyed and never looked back. It was a tough match, and though Chris had as much finesse as a lame mule he continuously stayed ahead by one goal. As soon as Simon equalised Chris replied with a keeper-eluding sensation, that is until the second half when barbaric fouls resulted in another loss of a Hayward team member. Eventually Simon gained his revenge and won 5-4, much to the annoyance of Chris who kept reminding Simon that he won the previous cup — a poor excuse that was quickly forgotten.



Simon's victory party is gatecrashed by Will brandishing the Justice Flop Swatter (deluxe model).

So with the floodlights fading, Simon was deemed the *Sensible Soccer* champ and awarded the esteemed trophy that glittered in all its paper and Selloape glory. The road to victory had been harsh and the rest of the team remain adamant that they were cheated. Still, there's always next year.

The Bruce Lee Story Dragon

Exclusive update

He was one of the most influential martial artists the world has ever known and now the console version of *Dragon* adds to the life, the love, the mystery, the legend...

Though Bruce Lee died 20 years ago, his films and teachings have reached legendary status. A phenomenal martial artist, Lee influenced the popularity of the eastern fighting arts in the west, through his on-screen presence along with his own discipline — Jeet Kune Do. His rise to stardom was tragically cut short (Lee died before the internationally acclaimed *Enter the Dragon* was released) but his life effected the martial arts world and consequently the lives of many friends and practitioners. It's this amazing life story that is the focus for the film bio-pic *Dragon — The Bruce Lee Story* on which the SNES version is based.

Assuming the role of Lee the objective is to fight the characters found in the film. Another player can join in for

Dragon hopes to include over 1000 individual animations and a host of special lighting moves.

simultaneous play (again as Lee, the proposed plan of the second player fighting as Linda Lee. His wife, was quickly scrapped against a computer controlled opponent.

Level one sees Bruce against one of the Australian sailors after they getacresh a party where Lee is in attendance. This first fight is a glimpse of the frantic action which inevitably takes place later.

Fists Di Fury

Upon arriving in America, as well as facing the ignorant attitude toward Orientals, on level two Bruce battles his own countrymen at a downtown restaurant. Together with mechetes, the chefs want a piece of the newcomer. In fact they want to ellice him to piecest As Lee's life progresses so do his abilities — the further into the game the more moves he acquires.

In the film, Bruce is condemned by other Chinese immigrants for teaching Westerners the ways of the Orient. This battle of pride involves Johnny Sun, one of the notorious Sun brothers, and though Lee wins the bout he receives a back injury leaving him crippled for six months (Incidentally, the injury was caused through weight training in real life). A rematch is later staged at the Long Beach Karate tournament. Johnny Sun steps up in an attempt to regain his pride and yet the devastating

power and blinding speed of Lee knocks Sun into the crowd and out of consciousness. Again, both these fights feature in the Virgin game — Sun is a thickly built sprite with pixel-packed fists.

Returning to Hong Kong to start his illustrious movie career he runs into the other Sun brother, Luke, who, to restore his brother's self-esteem, challenges him to a fight. Though his power is great, the angry Sun is brought down to size via Bruce's extraordinary fighting skills and diligence. Don't expect such an easy victory in the game!

Game Of Death

The subject is dismissed by many as merely a myth, but throughout the film Bruce is haunted by an inner demon trying to claim his very soul. Bruce is unable to avoid the conflict with the inner demon. The ultimate battle in the motion picture pitches Lee against the Bamurel entity with his son's (the late Brandon Lee) life at stake. As prophesied by a friend of his father's, if Lee doesn't defeat the evil spirit the tetsuful curse will be passed on to his son.

The Brandishing the legendary nunchaku (the British Censors hooked them out but they remain untouched in the game) Lee defeats the monster and consequently his fears. The inner demon is a formidable foe complete with ailing stick. By this time, if you get this far, Bruce has acquired all his skills — this is the final test of dedication and endurance.

With such an exhilarating and captivating central character and masses of hardened foes, the early signs suggest *Dragon* should be propelled to stardom as far as the martial arts master himself has been. *Dragon* hopes to include over 1000 individual animations and a host of special fighting moves — considering the wealth of knowledge and abilities Lee possessed, there should be!

So forget pathetic, damening 'chop-socky' action, the true spirit of the ancient martial arts has arrived. I know what you're thinking, you've heard it all before, but this time — just this once — we could have a game to match the hype. Stay tuned to SNEB FORCE for further updates as they happen.



WORK IN PROGRESS



Bruce proves to be the perfect bouncer when a gang of sailors getacresh a private party.



Above: The kitchen is the setting for a brutal food fight.



Left: recreating the movie's feel was high on the priority list.



The *Dragon* design team watched hours of movie footage to capture Bruce's special techniques.



In the midst of cooking pots the chef applies a devastating flying move with a vicious kitchen utensil while player two demonstrates an amazing flip technique — one of many fantastic features.



Some of the characters don't appear in the movie, such as this springy temptress.



Bruce was never afraid of multiple enemies. Look out for plenty of two-on-one action in the game.



The final fight pits young Lee against the stalking demon The Phantom in a Chinese burial ground. Behind you!



From box-office smash to sex star, Dragon fever sweeps the nation.

Year of the Dragon?

In the bowels of the Virgin building, designers, artists, programmers and producers are busy working on the SNES version of *Dragon*. This is the first time this talented team has worked together and the results of many months of hard work are starting to show. Ronald Plekiet Weeserik is the programmer of the SNES version of *Dragon*. He's come a long way since his very first piece of programming. 'It was on the TRS 80 computer,' he laughs, 'it was just an asterisk floating across the screen!' Since turning pro, he's had a successful programming career...

It's the first time this talented team have worked together, but the mixed ingredients appear to be making a fine dish. 'We're all experienced individually, but we had to get to know each other so we could all work together. We all have a hand in game design. We have meetings from time to time. Either the whole team get together to discuss the overall project, or individuals meet to discuss particular parts of the game.'

It's the biggest program data-wise Ronald's ever worked on, and considering *Dragon* is such an ambitious project, it's encountered surprisingly few problems. John Palmer, Lead Graphic Artist on *Dragon*, designed the main sprites and the other characters involved in the game. His 'quality control' role ensures all the sprites are good enough to give the rest of the team something to work with, except for the Bruce Lee sprite which he animated himself. He sketches the sprites first, takes various clips from the film and uses them to help draw up the characters. 'So far, we've used five or six main characters from the film. Not all the characters in the game are lifted from the film. If we run out of characters, we use a bit of artistic licence.'

The Bruce Lee sprite has about 130 frames of animation at the moment. 'In the final version, we're hoping for approximately 200 frames,' John continues. 'As the bad guys in the game come along, some of Bruce's moves don't actually work, so we have to change some frames. The Lee sprite has 35 moves at present, there may be more in the finished game. I wanted to steer away from the *Street Fighter II* final boss type of thing.'

From John, a sprite goes to the animators — Paul Hallowell, Stephen Cavaier and Mark Smith. They've worked in the animation industry.

How long a piece of animation takes depends on how complicated a move is. 'A punch may take a day, it's about two to three frames. Something more complicated, with say eight frames may take a week upwards,' Paul told us. 'The worst thing is drawing in the pixels, the shading and colouring. That's quite time consuming. This is a fairly graphics-intensive project. There are 10 enemies and Bruce. Each bad guy has over 100 frames of animation and, as John said, Bruce will have roughly 200. Then of course each badgie has their own definitive style of fighting. We've put in loads of frames. Paul's very passionate about the project. Hardly surprising, considering the amount of work the team have put into it. *Dragon* has slicker animation than any rival game. This will definitely be the best looking beat-'em-up.'

Interested? Judge for yourself in our upcoming review.



The *Dragon* team: Steve Cavell, John Palmer, Mark Smith, Ron Weeserik, Aaron Phelan, Mark Anthony and Paul Hallowell.

'Dragon Punch? This is the real thing'



Dragon looks like a real attuner. I've played *SFII*, *Mortal Kombat*, *Ranma 1/2* — even though the version of *Dragon* we saw was only half finished, it's got all the right ingredients to knock *Turbo* off the top slot. The Lee sprite averages six frames of animation per move which, compared to *Turbo's* four, is pretty impressive. One of the main differences is that *Dragon* is based entirely on real martial arts moves and has a central character needing no introduction, a man recognised as probably the greatest martial artist ever the world over. The Lee sprite alone has 40 moves! Bilma!

The learning curve for the various moves has been carefully thought out. Each time a character is defeated, the victorious Bruce learns a move of theirs. There is a training session option as well, so would-be Dragons can rehearse their lethal combinations with Yip Man, Lee's tutor. This surprisingly careful approach means that the player is fully prepared to fight the end boss, the mysterious Phantom. If *Dragon* lives up to expectations, Virgin could well have the best 'em-up to beat 'em all.

The rise and fall of a martial arts legend...

Way of the



Bruce Lee created a revolutionary approach to the martial arts and became a legend. Now movies and games fuel the myth adding a sacred quality to his name. Over the past decades many young warriors have tried to rekindle the Dragon's spirit but none have come close — until now...

Dragon

THE LEE LEGEND

As Lee himself said, shortly before his mysterious death in 1973: 'The martial arts are ultimately self-knowledge. A punch or a kick is not to knock the hell out of the guy in front, but to knock the hell out of your ego, your fear, or your hang-ups.' During his lifetime, he overcame the barriers of fear and prejudice to inspire a whole generation of action heroes.

Now two decades later, Lee's extraordinary life has been captured in a movie called *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story*. Based on the book, *Bruce Lee, The Man I Only Knew*, by Lee's widow Linda, it is as accurate a rendition of Lee's life as we can ever expect to get. Producer Rob Cohen explains Bruce was a man who struggled his whole life to embrace his destiny and overcome his personal demons. In the end, a cruel twist of fate prevented him from fulfilling that destiny.

Bruce Lee was born in San Francisco in the Hour of the Dragon on November 27th, 1940, the Year of the Dragon. He was given the name of Lee Yuen Kam, and was later known as Lee Siu Yung, meaning 'Little Dragon'. He was raised in Hong Kong, but returned to the United States when he was 18, after his involvement in fights and gang activities repeatedly landed in trouble with the law.

Hollywood soon discovered Lee, and the charismatic young fighter proved a dynamic actor as well. James Coburn and Steve McQueen were among the pupils who took instruction from Bruce in martial arts techniques, and they helped him find work as an actor in a short-lived television series called *The Green Hornet*.

Leathal weapon

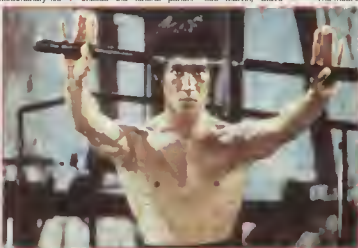
Lee developed the Kung Fu series for himself, but lost out on the star role to the distinctly non-Asian David Carradine. However, on a return visit to Hong Kong, Lee was amazed and delighted to discover that his role on *The Green Hornet* had made him into a local hero. He decided to stay and capitalise on this, starring in a martial arts extravaganza called *The Big Boss*.

Superficially, *The Big Boss* wasn't all that different from hundreds of other low-budget action films made that year in Thailand, Korea, Taiwan or Hong Kong. But unlike the others it broke box office records wherever it showed, out-taking classics like *The Sound Of Music*.

The follow-up was an even greater success. Ticket outlets were charging up to £15 a ticket in

Singapore, where over half a million people saw the film. The following year Bruce Lee had broken decisively into the foreign market with the hugely successful *Enter The Dragon*. But three weeks before it opened, Bruce Lee, a star at thirty, was dead, aged thirty-two, in mysterious circumstances that not even an inquest finally clarified.

A huge commemorative poster of him went up in Hong Kong, and thousands packed the streets outside the funeral parlour Lee Marvin, Slave



Bruce was a man who struggled his whole life to embrace his destiny and overcome his personal demons.

McQueen and James Garner were among his pill bearers. There were rumours that Lee had been assassinated by the Hong Kong mafia or a martial-arts-obsessed crank. Some even suggested that he died of an overdose of a body-building drug, and his quest for physical perfection had finally caught up with him. In truth all that was certain was that death was caused by a cerebral aneurysm, a swelling of the brain. The reason for it remains a mystery.

Essentially the Bruce Lee legend was based on four films. *The Big Boss* (1971) was Lee's first movie, and many argue his best. Next came the incredible *Fist Of Fury* (1972). Shortly after, Lee wrote and directed as well as produced *Way Of The Dragon*, which was originally called *Enter The Dragon* until Warner took the title for their film. The climax saw Lee taking on future martial arts star Chuck Norris.

The most well known Lee film was his last, *Enter The Dragon*, which was co-produced with Warner Brothers and went to become the definitive martial arts movie.

Following Lee's untimely death there were a spate of pseudo-biographies released, usually starring actors named Bruce Li or Bruce Leigh. But it was left to long-time Lee fan Cohen to provide the ultimate movie version of the martial arts superstar's life.

'I was at the American premiere of *Enter The Dragon* in 1973' says Cohen, 'and it was the first film in which I'd ever seen an audience respond to an actor as if he were part of a live sporting event. Cheering, applauding and screaming — I'd never seen anything like that before.'

Exit the Dragon

Cohen sees Lee's premature death, and the mythology that grew around it, as direct result of what Lee stood for when he was alive. 'I wanted to tell the story not of his death, but of his life,' explains the producer. 'But at the same time to represent that death as a clear presence all through life. When a man runs so hard and burns so bright for so short a time, I think there's an inner knowledge of the meaning of time, the shortness of time. That's what I wanted to infuse the film with.'

The most difficult task facing the film makers was finding somebody who could portray Bruce Lee convincingly. Cohen's casting director Bonnie Timmerman suggested a 25-year-old Chinese-American actor of Hawaiian descent, someone she'd seen while casting *Last Of The Mohicans*. 'He can act, he's deep, he has an incredible body,' she told Cohen. 'If this isn't the right guy, then I don't know who is. His name is Jason Scott Lee.'

'Lae?' said Cohen. 'His name is Lee? That's a good enough name for me.'

Ironically Bruce Lee's real-life actor son Brandon was never considered for the role, and would undoubtedly have turned it down if offered, because he was off pursuing a career as a successful movie star in his own right in movies like *Rapid Fire* and *Showdown In Little Tokyo*.

In a macabre twist of fate, Brandon was killed earlier this year in a shooting accident on the set of *The Crow*, an adaptation of James O'Barr's dark horror comic about a 'vampire zombie'. A real bullet had

become lodged in the barrel of a prop gun designed only to fire blanks, and the 29-year-old star died in hospital 13 hours after suffering the fatal wound.

Brandon's tragic death only adds fuel to the bonfire of controversy that has raged for two decades over his father's mysterious demise. But it seems to Cohen like a case of very bad luck.

Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story wisely avoids cheapening its subject by making sensational claims about the manner in which the screen's greatest martial artist shrilled off the mortal coil. 'I've had people tell me that for \$50,000 they'll tell me the real way Bruce died,' concludes Cohen. A forensic expert called it death by misadventure. 'I think that was mainly because he was in another woman's apartment. But we don't deal with that. If someone wants to make the sequel, *The Death Of Bruce Lee* with twelve different versions, they are welcome to it.' In the meantime, if you're all interested in martial arts, then *Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story* is an absolute must.

The Super League

Welcome to the new look Super League, with more information than ever before and a new number one in the shoot-'em-up chart. Any surprises? Read on...

Title	Score %	Items
1. Ghost 'n Ghouls	89	-
2. Sunset Riders	89	6
3. Castlevania IV	88	-
4. Super Pang	86	-
5. Jew & Mac 2	86	-
6. Check Rock	80	-
7. Super Ghousterman	81	2
8. Taz-Mania	86	1
9. Super Adv. Island	84	-
10. Battletoads	71	4

ARCADE

Title	Score %	Items
1. Legend of Zelda	93	-
2. Shadowrun	82	2
3. Jurassic Park	92	5
4. Out of this World	85	-
5. Mystical Ninja	88	-
6. Actraiser	88	-
7. Epixious	84	8
8. Knight & Magic II	84	8
9. Soul Blazer	84	-
10. Lagoon	75	5

ADVENTURE

Title	Score %	Items
1. SF II Turbo	98	2
2. SF I	82	-
3. Mortal Kombat	88	8
4. Ransen 1/2	84	7
5. Seibatsu Bakemon	82	-
6. Final Fight	79	-
7. Running Beat Rush	74	-
8. Super Double Drop	70	-
9. Turbodies II	75	-
10. Tuff E. Huff	65	2

BEST-OF-EM-UP

Title	Score %	Items
1. Mario KS-Stars	92	4
2. Super Mario World	95	-
3. Cool Spot	80	7
4. Mackey's Magic Gun	91	-
5. Mr. Nutz	90	5
6. Tiny Toons	87	-
7. The Addams Family	88	-
8. First Samurai	85	4
9. Prince of Persia	89	-
10. Super Putty	87	8

PLATFORM

Title	Score %	Items
1. Last Vikings	91	1
2. Legendage	80	-
3. Soul Troop	88	6
4. Super Tetris	85	-
5. Krusty's Fudhouse	82	-
6. Yoda's Cookies	78	4
7. Funheaver	78	-
8. Q-Bert	64	-
9. Tridlers	65	8
10. Spin Dizzy	82	-

PUZZLE

Title	Score %	Items
1. Super Empire	95	7
2. Alien 3	82	1
3. Super Star Wars	82	-
4. Paradise	87	-
5. Super Probotector	82	-
6. Zaxxon	90	6
7. Cyberstar	89	-
8. G.D.R.	86	1
9. Pop 'n Twinbee	80	2
10. Assault	90	-

SHOOT-EM-UP

Title	Score %	Items
1. Super Mario Kart	80	-
2. Rock 'N' Roll Racing	90	8
3. Super NBA	88	-
4. Junior Professional	80	-
5. Super Tennis	88	-
6. Borderer	82	2
7. Top Gear	88	-
8. Extra Innings	87	-
9. Exhaust Heat II	84	-
10. Super Soccer	84	-

SPORTS

Title	Score %	Items
1. Pilot Wings	91	-
2. Desert Strike	87	-
3. Mega lo Mania	87	8
4. Sim City	74	-
5. Player Manager	88	4
6. Parodius	81	-
7. Super Strike Eagle	79	1
8. Mech Warrior	79	-
9. Wing Commander 2	84	-
10. Super Conflict	78	7

STRATEGY

A League of their own...

Every game listed in this section has been selected by the SNES FORCE team as one of the ten best of its class. The SuperLeague™ will be

constantly updated to ensure that it continues to be an accurate listing of the very best games available for the SNES. SuperLeague™ listed titles

are all widely available in high street stores and via mail order. It is advisable to check compatibility with your retailer before purchase.

The Review s e c t i o n

...continues to pump out non-stop, action-packed coverage of all the latest SNES hits right through the festive season. Feast your eyes on the review crew's latest offerings...

Game Type

Our SuperLeague™ category – indicating what type of game is being reviewed

What the makers say

A chance for the people who produced and market the game to do a short sell to you

Controls

Which button does what when controlling the game. If a button does nothing, we say so

First Impression

As soon as a game comes into the SNES FORCE office for review it is given to three of our team for a first impression session

At this stage the reviewers aren't undertaking a complete critical analysis of the game. Instead they are simply presenting three snapshot impressions of the game

This element of the review process is probably the furthest most readers get when trying to evaluate software for themselves in shops, so it's a very useful and test to see just how well the game fares, even without the manual

Don't expect all three of the reviewers to agree with each other at this stage of the review (in fact don't rely on that at any point)

For a balanced view you should compare the First Impression panels with the corresponding Final Analysis section

First day score

One of the team is assigned the game for a complete review after the First Impression sessions have been completed. The first day score achieved is a good indication of how difficult (or otherwise) a game is

SuperLeague™ placing

If a game is considered to be good enough, it will find a place in one of the SNES FORCE SuperLeagues™

In simple terms, these are lists of the top ten games in various different genres

SNES FORCE strongly recommends the purchase of any game rated in a League

Normally only titles worthy of our Smash! accolade make it

Final day score

The same reviewer who played the game on its day of arrival will have been playing the game for over four weeks by this stage

You should expect the final day score to be much higher than the first day one

If it isn't – treat it as a danger sign. Our team is full of professional games players and it's probably just too hard

Comment

A full comment is much more detailed than a first impression statement

In order to give a fair assessment of the game one of our reviewing team has to spend at least half a day playing the game from end to end, or at least as far as they can get

Comments include a short summary quote and rating

Ratings box

The definitive summary of how each game is rated by the entire SNES FORCE team. Even if you don't read anything else – read this



Reviewed in full	
Super Empire.....	32
Cool Spot	36
Ranma 1/2	40
Aero The Acro-bat	44
Virtual Soccer	48
Total Carnage	52
Lamborghini Chall.	56
Timeslip	60
Super Conflict.....	64
Wordtris	68



Shoot-'em-up

Producer.....JVC
Supplier.....JVC

Price.....£59.99
Status.....UK Release

Players.....1
Lives.....3
Continues.....3
Extras.....Password System

What the makers say...

Super Empire is the eagerly-awaited sequel to the classic, *Super Star Wars*, with further use of Mode 7 graphics and digitised sound from the film. ■ JVC

Controls

	Shoot
	Jump
	Special Weapon
	Change Weapon
	Select Force
	Select Force

First impression

Level One looks similar to the first game, but I'm not bored of that yet.

Incredible sequel to an amazing shoot-'em-up, this is a joy to play.

The life of the film has been captured perfectly — it's brilliant.

First day score

Charlie

11548

Super Empire S

When JVC released **Smash!** *Super Star Wars*, many people thought they'd created the ultimate film tie-in. Think again...

On the run from the omnipotent *Empire*, the rebel forces' only hope is you, taking on the roles of trainee Jedi knight Luke Skywalker, mercenary Han Solo, and his hairy wookiee sidekick Chewbacca. Fighting the Imperial forces through key platforms, hostile jungle terrain and rapid-scrolling Mode 7 shoot-'em-up levels, *Empire* follows the same bleeding format as its predecessor, *Super Star Wars*, but

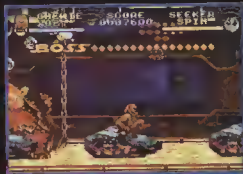
The jungle visuals and sound effects create an atmosphere so real, the temperature in the room rises!

the thrilling action is thicker and tastier than ever.

Collecting hearts boosts energy, and health swords increase the characters' lifeforce capacity. Gameplay has been altered to make the challenge tougher and Luke's Jedi skills improve with every mind exercise. His new power enables deflecting enemy fire by holding his saber up, directing it back to the aggressor. Once Luke has trained with Yoda, a multitude of useful powers are at his disposal when the relevant icons are collected. Using Elevation allows Luke to fly through the air, avoiding particularly nasty enemies. Freeze does just that — immobilises everything on screen in order to escape or inflict damage on a helpless villain. Luke can refill his health sword using the Heal power, very useful before facing an end-of-level guardian. If he wants to simply pass by unnoticed, the Invisibility icon is just the ticket,



The dense tropics on Dagobah house weird swamp creatures. Use Slowdown to halt the screen scroll and collect power-ups.



Chewbacca in the heat of the action at the Ughnaught factory. Jump across the platforms while avoiding the lava pit.

while Mind Control enables the manipulation of weak-spirited enemies. Saber Control is a deadly addition to the young warrior's armoury — launching his weapon across the screen eliminates everything in its path. Last but not least is Slowdown, bringing Imperial forces to a standstill, making them easier to kill. All in all, Luke is now a force to be reckoned with.

Levels alternate from the familiar but reworked run-and-shoot platform action to blink-and-miss-something Mode 7 flight levels. New features abound, and even the baddies have been revamped, with bigger and meaner bosses.

Thermal underwear

Out on patrol in the icy wastelands of Hoth, Luke unwittingly sees an Imperial tracking probe crash-landing. Investigation reveals its true identity, and the young rebel heads for the Rebel HQ to warn of the imminent Imperial onslaught, crossing icy wastes, finding his Taun Taun and battling fierce snow beasts.

As the big guns bear down, action

USE THE FORCE

All ends happily in the movies but in this game don't rely on your co-stars — look out for these...

Blaster: good from long range but weak.

Grenade: pick them up straight away to gain elixir.

Health sword: adds energy to the player's status bar.

Big Heart: the best icon for Jedi low on energy.

Shield: temporary invincibility is unstable.

Hearts: increase energy by tiny amounts.

Thermal detonator: create massive explosions.

Vader mask: adds a big points bonus to your score.

Strikes Back

JVC/Lucas Arts

IMPERIAL MINTS

The cream of the crop, the best of the best — Take a look what Luke and Han are up against...



After battling through the AT-AT's bulky body, a final feud with the cannonned head awaits. Hang around for a thermal detonator.



The walker packs a nasty barrel of laser fire and takes a lot of damage before collapsing. Roll out of the way and keep firing.



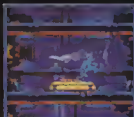
Watch out for this giant's lethal toy breath and swipe. Stay in the middle of the screen and shoot right up the monster's nostrils.



Defeating this boss is very hard due to the infuriating ball and chain swings. Switch to Luke's blaster and destroy the cannons.



The final confrontation takes place over two demanding duels with Vader. Keep blocking and using the Heal force power.



When frozen by the ice blasts, the only choice is to wait to thaw out.



The light saber is much more effective than the wimpy blaster.

Below: Luke duels at the heart of an Imperial AT-AT Walker.



As the snow blizzards rain down Luke speeds along the terrain looking for ATSTs and AT-ATs. Kill five of each.



Using amazing Mode Y techniques, Cloud City Assault is a level to behold. Skim both above and below the clouds.

'As fantastic as the movie'



We switch on the arena, people crowd around the monitor, then the theme tune fades in. It begins in the thick of things, with sound effects exploding from all directions. Lasers zing through the air, Luke's lightsaber retains its traditional hum, and even Chewbacca maintains his recognisable growl. Not only are there authentic effects but a cacophony of musical scores and mood-setting tunes, like in Dagobah where the dense tropics let out all kinds of animal noises.

As far as difficulty is concerned *Empire* is tough, easy mode is more demanding than many 'frustrating' games and yet it doesn't come across as annoying in the slightest. What makes *Empire* a certified slammer is the 3D stages which would double as stand-alone games if any other company had produced them. The Hoth flying stages, the asteroid shoot-out and the X-Wing assault — they're amazing to play and the fact they're individual from each other (not just different graphics) heightens their appeal.

Graphically stunning, musically outstanding and remarkably addictive this is one of the best games to come along for one whopping big time. Cuts on platform games can just bundle up together and commit genocide. If it's spectacular space action you're after get *Super Empire Strikes Back* — it doesn't disappoint. You'll drool syrup over this.

95%

switches to Han as he dashes around the rebel hideout in a mad scramble to escape. Storm Troopers and enemy droids scuttles from all sides while he retreats over three Rebel Base levels, similar to the platform shooting of the original but with a more complex layout and meaner enemies.

The scene is set for the first stunning 3D section. To clear a path for escape, Luke has a set number of objects to destroy including toppling five AT-ATs with a cable and some fancy flying. He must negotiate hilly landscapes and airborne Imperial troops before blasting a tow rope from the rear of his craft, banking hard and eventually crippling the metallic beast.

All tied up

Mode 7 levels come thick and fast, from skimming over ice to negotiating an asteroid field as Solo, with fifteen Tie-Fighters on his tail. The action continues as Han's shield is gradually depleted by enemy fire and the rocks hurtling towards the cockpit.

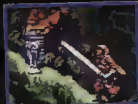
Luke returns to the action once more as he battles up a Walker's body to a face-to-face confrontation with its ugly head and tank-like lasers.

The rebel escape complete, Luke seeks the teachings of Yoda in the Dagobah System. Both levels involve hacking through jungle and defending against bizarre aliens, then an enormous green and boss. The change in graphical style is stunning, from the barren white wasteland of the inhospitable Hoth to the overgrown greenery of Dagobah — the jungle visuals and sound effects create an atmosphere so real, the temperature in the room rises!

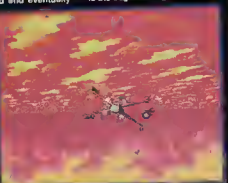
After meeting the wise one, head for Cloud City, home of Han's old associate Lando Calrissian. In the first of these levels Chewie fights Vader's minions in the corridors, on the second Han does the same and battles more Imperial troops on his way to a showdown with the enormous spacecraft and guardian. Next is the fiery Ughnaught Factory where Chewbacca returns to save the wounded C-3PO from crushing machinery.

Things aren't looking good for Han, he's cornered by Vader and fights a desperate resistance on his last level, hopping up and down platforms in hydraulic lifts before being captured and frozen in carbon by the master of the dark side. Meanwhile, Skywalker battles his way to the city in the sky, defeating 15 Imperial transporters before approaching his destination. His Jedi training is completed by facing Darth Vader in single combat. A one-on-one battle to make the hardest heart melt a beat, this confrontation climaxing in either Vader's death... or Skywalker's.

The first game was acclaimed by many as the best shoot-'em-up ever, and *Empire* is here to go one step further.



An emotional reunion with R2D2 is the Dagobah stage.



Skin the X-Wing up and under the vapour to dodge the enemy fire.



Chewie's basic blaster is weak so keep an eye out for power-ups.



Guide the Millennium Falcon through this mega asteroid field.

Final analysis



A perfectly executed extension to the original game, this is going to be a blinding trilogy.



A tough challenge which never becomes boring, enthralling from start to finish, buy it now!



So incredibly addictive, this has to be one of the best games ever — I'm impressed.

Final day score

Charlie and Simon

Easy

DEFINISHED



Numero Uno! The fantastic varied levels places this sci-fi sensation at the top. It'll take a lot to beat this.

Sound

95

Sound effects straight from the movie trilogy and spectacular musical scores add to the excitement.

Graphics

92

More varied than any other game. Beautiful platform levels plus unbelievable 3D flying sequences.

Playability

94

Viciously addictive. One go is all it takes before the hours, days and nights just fly by.

Lastability

91

Too tough for some but those who stick with it will have a hell along the way. Addiction doesn't die easily.

Force factor

95

A massive galactic fantasy to send Star Wars enthusiasts into a frenzy and make George Lucas proud.

'Surpasses its predecessor'



I defy you not to be impressed by *Empire*, particularly the level with the AT-AT walkers and snow speeder — it's truly amazing! Overall, the graphics in *Super Empire* are more varied than in the first game, and the snazzy huge colour palette is used to the full. The graphics are truly brilliant. Once again, the sound is literally mindblowing — some of the best ever heard on a disc. There's even more speech than in the first game, and so sounds slightly better. The one thing which let *Star Wars* down was its difficulty level — it was a little easy to complete. Well, fear not because *Empire* doesn't suffer from this problem, it's well solid!

There are loads of action-packed levels and each is full of baddies and huge guardians.

Playability is stunning, it's so easy to pick up you never want to put it down. If you liked *Super Star Wars*, *Super Empire Strikes Back* should go straight to the top of your shopping list, if you missed the first game or didn't like the look of it, get *Super Empire* anyway — I guarantee you won't be disappointed!

94%

KEVIN KEEGAN'S **PLAYER** *Manager*

▶ DREAM TIME
HUMAN
KID
ACTION
MANAGEMENT
1989

Nintendo

Magazine System



SNES
EDGE



ANCO

"...GOODS NO"
"PLAYER MANAGER CAN'T BE FAULTED"
"OUTRAMPED THE BEST ALL ROUND"
"THE ONLY GAME ON THE MARKET"
"CAN IT ONLY ENTHRALLED"
"A MASTER OF A NAME"



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Platform

Producer... *Virgin*
Supplier... *Virgin*

Price... *£44.99*
Status... *Official UK Release*

Players... *1*
Lives... *3*
Continues... *0-6*
Extras... *Difficulty settings*

What the makers say...

The coolest, most controllable and slickest animated character ever seen on any computer or console system (even Sega can vouch for that).

■ *Virgin*

Controls

	Fire
	Jump
	Nothing
	Nothing
	Nothing
	Nothing

First Impression

Excellent conversion of the Mega Drive classic. Bigger and better.

I can't look at this without feeling thirsty. Get a load of those graphics.

The graphics are much better than the original MD version.

First day score

Wii... *Level 3*
95270



COOL

Born from a 7-Up can, he's one of the most unlikely heroes ever. But Cool Spot's origins go far deeper, for the race of Spots actually exist...

Smash!

Spot! These flash little circles live in hiding from humans, content with being drop-dead cool on their own, thank you very much. Until one fateful day when a bored super-villain chanced upon the lily red fellows and was so amazed he sat about scheming and plotting to capture them all to show the other humans (at a nominal entry charge, of course). He sat eleven traps in the form of baited cages and succeeded in filling every one, giving

Spot's 250 fluid animations ensure his place as the slickest, grooviest

the dastardly fellow instant fame and big wads of cash. Little did he know, however, that his calculations were wrong — there are twelve Spots!

Cool...

The last remaining creature is known as Spot, (cool as they are, the Spots aren't very imaginative with names) and stick with just the one between them) a potential icon-figure and famous hero clad in the uniform white trainers and gloves and black shades characteristic of his breed. And so he sets out to



Level One's detailed walkmen is just one example of the swans versions many improvements over its Mega Drive counterpart.

save his friends from circa adeshow misery and vanquish the demon who captured them — Wild Wicked Willy Will.

The platform action takes place over eleven levels, the goal being to collect enough little spots icons, the aim being to gather lives for the next few levels by grabbing all the spots. Reaching the higher loons means jumping on the cunningly arranged bubbles, boosting jumps just enough to reach the next — miss one though, and it's back to the floor. Bubbles regenerate after a few seconds, giving as many lives as you can fit into the strict time limit to get to the top of the bottle. Make it and a letter from the word

and, later on, all spots on a level — is entry into the end-of-level bonus game. This takes place inside a 7-Up bottle packed with collectable spots and extra time icons, the aim being to gather lives for the next few levels by grabbing all the spots. Reaching the higher loons means jumping on the cunningly arranged bubbles, boosting jumps just enough to reach the next — miss one though, and it's back to the floor. Bubbles regenerate after a few seconds, giving as many lives as you can fit into the strict time limit to get to the top of the bottle. Make it and a letter from the word



The train level begins with a speeding locomotive and ends with precise platform-hopping.



Spot jumps out from behind a post in level two, Pier Pressure. What he lacks in dimensions, Spot makes up for with puns!

Spot



between levels your cool percentage is counted. It takes 100% cool to reach the top.



All the game's rules are explained in this crumpled up piece of paper.

'The coolest character vet'



very so... a game a... g... com
phreus and I'm awed enough to use them, so just to
out of my system — you'll be seeing spots, it knocks
spots off everything else, spot the difference, Spot the dog
a better.

Platforms, be they so faint stations or the feet of models leak traffic... er... look a trifle compared to the glossy platforms of Not that the backdrops draw your attention the most. He struts along, white trainers creaking with each hip, before dropping to the "aba baba" boys' tunes, clicking his gloved fingers and cutting through the without a trace of a flicker. In each partition—every level has something visually stunning, particularly the effect during stage three. As Spot walks, the surrounding area dimly lights up, not here—the office was filled with 'oohs' and 'aahs' as if a fireworks display was

A jump and shoot routine *Goof Spot* may be, but there aren't many platform games with such a quirky character at the helm. Graphics aside, the gameplay is spot on too. Enemies are dotted around at just the right distance so *Spot's* death is due only to your bad technique rather than a programming fault.

Put it this way, I've tried my utmost to find a glitch, a spanner in the works, but there's not a hint of anything remotely bad. Good, clean, wholesome fun.

90%



Extra lives are often found by ignoring painting gloves and heading in the opposite direction.



Can you spot our hero? He's on the third reel from the left flippin' over all those juicy bonuses.

RAD ROUTINES

Being such a quirky little fellow, Spot does all manner of things if left to his own devices...



Having learnt his Red Spot Code down to the tiniest detail, before jumping he looks up...

Sand, sand, sand! It gets absolutely everywhere and Spot knows it, handles to the fore!



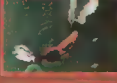
Ash, when Spot were a lad they made their own entertainment, none of these fancy consoles...

looks down, then leaps from the platform, being careful not to run in case he falls over.



When the timer runs out, Spot vents his anger by smashing the alarm clock with a mallet.

Unruly little beggar gets really bored after a couple of minutes of inactivity and starts pulling faces.



Time for a break and a spot of light entertainment. You could say Cool Spot's finger-clicking good!

platform our circular friend executes amazing aerial tricks on the way.



Drama Queen? Drama Babe
From Hell more like. As
soon as it's game over then
out come the waterworks.

God, rescuing your mates is just so tiring. Spot shows his drama queen tendencies and faints.



Spot the difference...



Many months ago I had to write a tips book, a volume of unprecedented usefulness to owners of the (cough!) MegaDrive. There was one game I played until I'd got enough words on it, but instead of reaching for the next in the pile I continued. Puzzled, I eventually came to the conclusion that it was bloody good and I was really enjoying this MD game. One personality crisis later I was overjoyed when this cart strutted into the office, a pixel-perfect conversion no less!

But no, oh no, Virgin have changed the graphics and altered the levels and the new snail. *Cool Spot* piddles on the MD version! The graphics are still fluidly animated, with a main sprite to die for, but now they're shaded more subtly and have fewer blocky edges. The backgrounds are inobtrusive but fun, with tons more parallax and beautifully drawn still cartoons.

Worth the money for *Spot's* moves and quirky routines, this is a wonderful example of how platforms should be. The only error I can see are the precision needed to jump certain platforms compared to the ease of the rest. *Spot* moves pretty fast, especially in the air, and on levels like the yellow submarine one and the train where you go high enough to scroll upward so the platform you're aiming for isn't visible for most of the leap, it's maddeningly tricky at times and laughably easy at others. A niggling complaint, but so many of these sections prevent *Cool Spot* from being an all-time classic.

But what the hell, it's got fun, great graphics and sounds that whup the MD's, what more do you usually want from your next platform purchase? I'll wager you'll be disappointed if it isn't this one!

85%

Virgin awakes, giving a continue! Starting with no continues, it's worth spending ages on the easy levels getting extra spots.

After every level performance is evaluated and extra lives awarded for time left and spots collected.

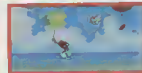
...as ice

Gameplay switches from jumping various 'traditional' solid platforms to leaping between balloons and grabbing the string. You're also called upon to shin up and down ropes or wires, while blasting baddies with *Spot's* effervescent missiles and collecting little spots, then locating the cage at the end of the level. To aid your progress, some spots leave helping hands when collected. These little white gloves point in the direction of the cage. Don't always trust them, though, as going the other way often reveals hidden or obscurely placed sections containing bonus spots or lime icons. Energy is replenished by collecting last-rising fizzy potion bottles left by some enemies when shot. The effectiveness of these potions depends on the difficulty setting.

Spot's 250 fluid animations ensure his place as the slickest, grooviest character of the moment. Are you up for the fizziest adventure ever? Put on your shades, trainers, gloves and paint your face red — it's gonna be a bubbly ordeal for the crimson crusader.



Above: the intro sequence shows *Spot* bottle surfing.



Left: one of the trickier sections. Leap and grab the balloons.

THE BAD BOYS

Cool Spot features some of the most imaginative and colourful villains around...



The evil spilted ball, lurker of the little platform.



We all know wasps are acorn, but how many lob (treble)?



This creepy crab pinches more than an inch.



The crawling worms hang out on ropes — a real pain.



Shoot the clown in the mouth and dodge the pearls.



These cowboys appear on the toy cupboard levels.



Flying birds can cause *Spot's* nasty headaches.



The cunning spiders lie in wait in mouseholes.



These pencil-lops spread their arms for attack range.



The gnashing teeth look mean but are very slow.

Final analysis



A great game offering many hours of fun-packed gameplay. Graphics and sound are top notch.



Zest, bubbles, fizz and one amazing central character. Now someone get me a drink.



Easily the coolest character for months and the grooviest platformer for... ooh, ages.

Final day score

Will

Level 8

85% 180620

SUPER LEAGUE

2. SUPER MARIO WORLD

3. COOL SPOT

4. WICKY'S MAGIC QUEST

Whoever would have thought *Super Mario World* would be seriously challenged? *Cool Spot's* an amazing game which does just that.

Sound

85

Groovy rock 'n' roll tunes with a sixties swing and bubbly effects to match the fizzy drink theme.

Graphics

93

Some of the best animation ever seen, especially of *Spot* himself. Backgrounds are just as impressive.

Playability

91

Every level offers something graphically new as well as a fresh challenge.

Lastability

88

Check-a-block with sprites, levels and secret surprises you'll come back even if you complete it.

Force factor

90

When smoozy graphics are coupled with fiendish gameplay you're got a platform game to be reckoned with.

NO MORE MR NICE GUY



It's time to earn respect.

To be a worthy Samurai you'll certainly need your mighty sword. But you'll also need wisdom to summon the Wizard Mago, and skill and power to scale the insurmountable walls and leap over pools of fire.

A mixture of aggression and wits will aid you in your quest to become the ultimate warrior.

And then they'll have to take you seriously.

FIRST

SAMURAI



SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM



Beat-'em-up

Producer.....Ocean
Supplier.....Ocean

Price.....£49.99
Status.....Official UK release

Players.....1-2
Lives.....N/A
Continue.....Infinite
Extra.....None

What the makers say...

Holy hermaphrodite! *Ranma 1/2* is a beat-'em-up with a difference, with an unusual twist to a usually male-dominated arena. ■Ocean

Controls

	Normal attack
	Jump
	Special attack
	Nothing
L	Block
R	Block

First Impression

Very cute beat-'em-up with good graphics, gameplay seems a bit lacking.

Sensational Manga-style graphics with hilariously lame finishing phrases...

Looks great, plays a little wiffy, though great moves all round

First day score

Will.....Easy
FINISHED

Ranma

As Manga fever sweeps the country, a new kind of hero emerges from Japanese culture — Ranma, everybody's favourite boy/girl nextdoor.

Adolescence is difficult enough as it is but poor Ranma has an extra confusing problem. Not only is he sprouting hair in strange places but he changes into a girl on contact with water. This unusual trait is the result of an accident in which the androgynous lad nearly drowned.

It all started in an ancient martial arts training ground containing over 100 lakes. Training here stopped abruptly when students learned the lakes carried a curse — the evil nia transforms anyone coming into contact with the water into whatever form previously drowned in it.

Young Ranma travels to the old training ground with his father, Genma, and falls into the water. One metamorphosis later and the dark-haired male is replaced by a red-haired girl.

Strange as it is, Ranma changes into a male with hot water but sparks off the curse again with cold water

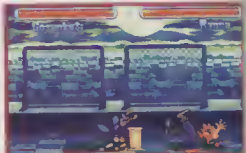
Strange as it is, Ranma changes into a male with hot water but sparks off the curse again with cold water (sending his chums into a frenzy during swimming lessons no doubt).

The big brawl

There's a new principal at Ranma's school but he's not your average head teacher. The mysterious Hawaiian is encouraging the students to partake in a martial arts



Ranma 1/2 combines traditional special moves of with incredible manga graphics and a wacky sense of humour.



Like the mighty Thor Gosunkugi packs a weighty mallet. You wouldn't think he'd have room in those trousers.

tournament promising each competitor illusory rewards should they win.

Faced with such an offer, Ranma enters after the principal agrees to fix his exam results. All that stands between him and a sling of A-grades is ten competitors in the tournament (eight normal entrants and two big bosses). Any one of the ten participants (Ranma is counted as two separate people) can be assumed and taken into battle.

There's Ranma's dad, Genma who (of all things) is a panda. Sick of being taken for granted by the younger generation (including his son) the old bear decides (with encouragement from the twisted principal) to partake in the tournament to teach juniors respect for their elders. Then there's Ryoga, an immensely vicious, suffering promised a cure by the head if he's victorious. King is a gambler who dreams of opening a casino. He's been encouraged to enter the tournament by promises of cash from the shady Hawaiian.

Bambu is a strong-willed, purple-haired babe out to prove she's stronger than any male, while Mathias

King

A gambler trying to play his cards right. His arrow attack is a real pain in the king of hearts.

Not content with pulling rabbits out of hats, King lets a reindeer poke his glowing nose out.

1/2



Adeline



She may be small but this lady's extremely agile. This is her version of Honda's 100 hand slap.

Oh come on! Everyone's seen this move in *SFIII*. The Dragon Punch is still powerful though.



Bambou



Her speed comes in useful during aerial attacks. [X] jumps and [Y] for the cotton buds.

Double-ended attacks give her an excellent defence and good counter-attack.



Gosunkugi

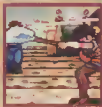


The scientific kid possesses some wacky moves including his 'sawing a wooden bear' attack.

The mallet attack causes lots of damage and is a great move to counter the slower fighters.



Frederic



This pretty girl is lethal with a spade. She has the longest reach in the game.

Fred can also throw magic dust sending opponents reeling in a blast.



Genma



Genma makes up for his limited speed with his awesome power.

The game's best finishing move — Genma's ariel butt splash.



Left: King's reindeer trick always proves a bit with the ladies.

Right: Mathias' mace attack sends Ranna's female half reeling.



'Twister for the 90s'



The last time I saw anything resembling sex-changing twisters, and animals was at a video party when I was sixteen. *Ranna 1/2* is a bit more tasteful and more interactive (with hindsight that's a godsend) and wags my wettlingons if it isn't great! The mind boggles at the characters and their manoeuvres (what twisted individual thought of King's reindeer-out-of-the-hat technique?) and I couldn't play a logic game without rolling around with laughter (okay, not literally around — I'm just trying to create an atmosphere).

If it's pathetic but there again it's a totally different game style.

The objective is to beat somebody up but you can't take it as seriously as Capcom's — laying into a Panda with a spade? I mean, come on!

What it boils down to is a game to make you favourite host at a party. Just imagine a lot of merry people who laugh at the slightest thing — this is the perfect hors d'oeuvre!

Instantaneous one-player mode — so very, very easy. On the other hand, the five vs. five action is a gift from the gods. Take the advice of a Hayward — buy a mallet, get some mates (that's the hardest chore I find), hold a party and

84%

Just one of the totally loony finishing scenes. Here, Ryoza bowls while Mathias does a strange victory kitty dance.

Is a mysterious magician looking for happiness through the fights. The participants look very sweet and innocent but Adeline is far from that. A judo practitioner, Adeline wants to put to rights the boys she's dealed end the principal appears overly eager to see the lads in question get beaten up.

The voice of science is represented by Gosunkugi, who's head over heels in love with Adeline. After the headmaster sweats the way to her heart is to win the contest, Gosunkugi can do little but follow his eager loins into the tournament. Finally, there's Fredenc Delarmined to establish her own restaurant she makes a pact with the principal who offers to sponsor her cuisine peccet if she, like the rest, completes

Japan knees

If a fighter defeats the other eight people she/he'll go forward to face Pantyhose, a dubious named martial arts expert with the bewildering gift of transforming into a winged boar.

Then there's the principal himself, who turns out to be quite the opposite from the caring head teacher he originally appears to be.

Each character has their own individual 'power moves' (accompanied by a loud Japanese cry) in addition to the normal punch and kick techniques and a unique victory dance or losing grimace at the end of the bout — one flops to the floor crying while another draws out a camera and takes his own photo.

Two players can go head-to-head using any fighter (including Pantyhose) in either the duel option or the multi-character alarmist where each player selects five fighters to slot it out through five bouts.

Ranma 1/2 is the UK version of the Japanese *Ranma 1/2 Part 2*, and is a massive hit in Japan boasting comic, animated series and a mass of merchandise. Can you cope with the split personalities left, right and centre?



Mathias



Mathias has a variety of startling special attacks, one being swinging a mace cunningly hidden within his deep sleeves.

The devious oriental also has a wacky extend-out attack guaranteed to take opponents by surprise.



Ranma nails his female alter ego with a lightning punch attack. The best counter for this is a jumping kick.



Above: beaten again Ryoga bursts into tears, while Pantyhose celebrates.



Right: urged on by the crowd, Freddy demonstrates her offensive superiority.



Pantyhose

Pantyhose's powerful flying foot attack is a variation on Chun Li's fast feet.

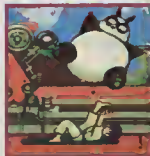


Quicker than Zoro, Pantyhose whips out a baton and delivers a fast throw to whoever stands in his way.



Above: Mathias desperately tries to avoid Pantyhose's razor sharp talons and counters with a jumping kick.

Below: ...and they say pigs can't fly. Pantyhose's alter ego quickly dispels this myth.



With a throw almost identical to Ryu's, Adeline shows her strength.

'Streetfighter II gone soft'



Simon

It appears one of the main reasons *Ranma* is getting an official release is to capitalise on the growing Manga craze.

Looking at *Ranma*, you're forgiven for thinking you're watching a Manga movie — the graphics are great. All the comic heroes and heroines are brought to life and the likeness is astounding. Animation is top notch, the characters move without a hint of slowdown or flicker, and it's easy to see where most of the memory's been used. Sound is very good, with excellent level variation, and there are a few examples of sampled speech lurking in there to boot.

In the presentation department *Ranma* also hits the mark, each character has their own array of special moves and attacks, and the excellent intermission screens break up the fighting.

Why, I hear you ask, hasn't *Ranma* got a 90%+ mark? The problem lies in the gamesplay — or lack of it! The whole game is very shallow and despite the range of moves available, only one or two are needed to complete it, discouraging any combination attacks that practice offers. It's possible to complete the game on your first sitting, and the saving grace is the excellent two-player mode. All-in-all, *Ranma 1/2* is a great looking game let down by a few gamesplay flaws and an inadequate difficulty level. If you're a beat-'em-up fan looking for fun game with excellent graphics and already own *SFII Turbo*, you could do a lot worse than *Ranma 1/2*.

83%



Pantyhose 2

Pantyhose's after-ego is a huge raging boar — with wings!



Although very slow, charging an opponent causes loads of damage.

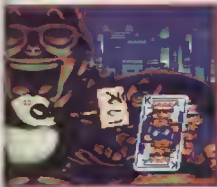


Ranma Girl

This impressive cyclone spin causes loads of damage.



This female fireball dazzles everyone in its path unlike the boy's flares which, though, strong, remains stationary.



Beating King's shield is a real pain, but the penetrator King's immovable shield.



Ranma Boy

Ranma's fireball is perfect for blocking surprise incoming attacks. Use it regularly.

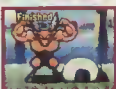


Surprise aggressive attackers with this cyclone move.



Above: The game's Goliaths battle it for top honours.

Slight: each brawl takes place in a different scene.



Ryoga

Not the most original of moves but this fireball is very effective.



With a loud Japanese incantation Ryoga sets the floor alight.



Final analysis



Cosmetically a good game that's great fun to play, especially in two-player, can be frustrating.



Not much of a challenge for solo players but endless hours of fun for two. Great graphics.



Clumsy controls but a visual feast and a surreal fight snack. Definitely well worth a look.

Final day score

Chris H

Normal

FINISHED

SUPER LEAGUE

4. FINAL FIGHT

5. RANMA 1/2

6. BATMAN RETURNS

Ranma's official release replaces the Import version at number five, still fending off tough competition from the caped crusader.

Sound

88

Wacky and varied tunes accompany each fight. Speech is sparse but excellent when it comes along.

Graphics

91

Very faithful to the Manga drawings that inspired it — colourful and well animated.

Playability

81

Each character has a wide selection of moves but sadly most of them are only for show.

Lastability

83

Endless fun in two-player mode but too easy for experienced beat-'em-up fans.

Force factor

Visually gorgeous, generally seamless but in the end one does away. Still worth a look, though.

84



Platform

Producer	Sunsoft
Supplier	Marubeni
Price	£64.99
Status	UK Release
Players	1
Lives	
Continues	3
Extras	None

What the makers say...

Unlike any game you've ever played. Thrills, chills and sometimes spills, so look out below — here comes Aero!

■ Sunsoft

Controls

	Throw stars
	Jump/drill attack
	Look around screen
	Hover
	Nothing
	Nothing

First impression

	Looks great, cartoony sprites - and backgrounds - and cool tunes.
	A perfect setting for a game and Aero's one of the best characters yet.
	The backgrounds on the circus level are incredible. Looks like a winner.

First day scene

Jon	Level two
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

Aero the A

Hedgehogs, squirrels, plumbers — these days anyone can be a hero. But to save a circus needs a special saviour...

Oh, the bitter agony of failure. Drives men to despair, it does. Take Edgar Ektor for instance — once a happy-go-lucky clown with a travelling circus, until he lost the edge and the crowds decided it wasn't worth paying to see him. Distraught, his dreams shattered, poor Edgar couldn't take it and he snapped. Years later he's back, now a successful industrialist, backed by an army of fellow failed circus acts bent on stopping the show for everyone else. This troop of miserable misfits seize control of the World Of Amusement Circus And Funpark and sabotage the whole place.

The layout and nasty surprises in the Museum of Herrers remain a mystery. Step right up fer tha greatest shew en earth...

Who could be brave enough to take on this fiend and his hench-acts but the World Of Amusement's star attraction Aero The Acrobat? Zero The Acrobat might have been, it he wasn't so twisted by jealousy over Aero's success and hadn't joined Ektor for a chance of a pop at his hated rival.

Less than Zero

Aero's task is to explore every last corner of the park by shooting himself from cannons, diving through hoops of fire, swim-diving into barrels of water, hanging by his claws from a runaway rollercoaster and bungee jumping down rocky outcrops over white water. His quest begins in the centre ring of the circus, then the fun park, the



The Fun Park level has multiple rides and stunts to perform. Here Aero takes a trip in the ferris wheel.



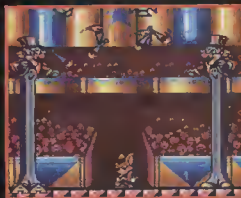
The early stages provide some invulnerable high-altitude thrills on the tightropes slung across the top of the marquee.

woods and finally the Museum of Horrors.

Aero faces a total of 14 levels, two bosses and two bonus stages on his way to the showdowns in the Museum, and who knows what terrors lurk inside? Each act (there are

five and a boss in the Circus and Funpark levels and four in the Woods) has a different objective, ranging from the relatively easy 'jump on seven star platforms' to 'ride the Aero-Coaster' and 'jump through 25 flaming hoops'. Locating the Bonus Item, a 'B'-shaped icon, makes Aero eligible for the bonus acts on the first two levels where he can gain extra points.

Aero faces a malicious mass of twisted opposition, but he has attacks to match their every sick plot. He can climb the high wire and tread a macho path high above the arena, hover for a couple of seconds by furiously flapping his little wings, look up or down and scroll the screen, throw collectable stars while stationary or jump and perform his patent drill attack in an upward or downward direction. Good thing too, as Ektor has a maladjusted multitude of revenge-thirsty



The first boss, these double stilt clowns juggle flaming batons. The only way to stop them is knock off their legs.

acro-bat



The bungee-jump section, where Aero drops toward the river past hazardous spike platforms, takes a dip in the deep blue sea then bounces back skyward.



'Drove me acro-batty'



Aero, apart from a few minor gripes, one damn fine game. It keeps me coming back again and again, even after I acknowledged its faults. The animation is superb, particularly Aero and his multitude of expressions, and the backgrounds are delightful — seargh! I'm starting to sound like Enid Blyton! The sound is great, with lashings of whipped cream... help!... we'd never've caught that burglar without you kids. Here's ten shillings. Hooray! Now for a feast!

Seriously, Aero is a fine example of a quality platformer, full of character and surprises. The only minor faults I could find are the drill weapon, which is difficult to master and use without getting lamped, and the difficulty setting. It took us darn near two days to get off the second level! Then again, look at *Mr Nutz* — what's a game without a challenge?

If it's a cosmetically excellent, challenging, all-round fun platformer

88%



This Fun Park boss scrolls vertically, throwing punches all the while and crying deadly crocodile tears when drilled in the nose.



The hoops appear in the circus level and grant points for diving through them.



The rapid water slide section, which we've seen somewhere before...

BATTY BAD GUYS

Bugger Elder has returned with a whole host of brain-blast-bits. Here are the main beach-acts.



This airborne jewel comes as a surprise when the screen scrolls upward — he's a floating head.



This elephant, upset at her lack of grace.



Fire-clowns hope to dampen Aero's spirits.



This chick looks cute but causes chase.



This foe takes time to lob and juggle balls.



One-hit clowns are very easy to kill.



Drill-mixing flying guy quickly.



The spinning clown hurls gags and platforms.



Bubble machines take you to higher ledges — why do you look so happy, Aero? 'I'm just a bubbly kind of guy.'

► creatures on his side including spinning clowns, trapeze artists, evil jesters, ghosts, robots and Marvin the Magician, not to mention the fiendish Zero.

Aerobic antics

To aid his progress, Aero makes use of objects and circus props strewn around, such as cannons, helium balloons and bubble machines for reaching high platforms or hoops. The unicycle makes him invincible on the high wire, trampolines help to reach higher platforms and collectables, trapezes are for avoiding spike-laden floors and see-saws give that extra lift for those out-of-reach ledges. Extra points come in the shape of hoops to precisely dive through, various stunts like the 'dive into a barrel of water' and discarded circus snacks like lollipops, hot dogs, cupcakes, soda and cheese. Yes, cheese.

After twenty thousand points or a perfect round (all possible snacks collected), Aero is awarded an extra life. These can also be gained by hunting down Aero Head Icons, one per extra life. This is what's known of the first three levels, but the layout and inevitably nasty surprises in the Museum of Horrors remain a mystery. Step right up for the greatest show on earth...



Dare he brave the thrills and spills of the rampant roller-coaster ride? Aero feels queasy looking at the entrance.

'Batty control method'



There aren't many things more irritating than knowing you can do something, but not being able to do it. Somebody should have informed Aero's programmers of this, because the game would have been a sure-fire smash if they'd known.

Sunsoft have opted for minimalist graphics, ie small, extremely detailed sprites and a matching colour scheme (a rarity in console carts), with an uncluttered screen but gorgeous, shaded parallax backdrops. The animation is faultless, as Aero wobbles and teeters through various sets and routines and the supporting cast follow suit, with mean expressions on grease-painted faces. Attention is paid to every last detail right down to separate animation sequences for different tricks, such as the swan dive into a pool of water and Aero gritting his teeth as the bungee rope pulls him up — no expense spared in the graphics marquees.

Turn up the volume and treat yourself to cutesy tunes rivalled only in their kitsch vomit factor by Robocod. After playing with the sound on for a quarter of an hour, Aero gently grates the nerve endings. After playing it with the sound merely quiet for half an hour, whuf! when the little bugger throws away the grater and takes a chainsaw to 'em.

Frustrating isn't the word. Time after time I triggered a restart point and met a three-hit clown who sometimes blocks when you dive bombs (not that you can tell if they have or not). So you bounce off, they walk forward, you take a hit, dive bomb, bounce off... you die, you scream. That's just one example of the dysfunctional drill attack, others abound.

The game is huge and I really enjoyed playing Aero up until a certain point, when I snapped and the challenge became tedious and irritating. Still, many have more patience than I...

70%

FLIPPIN' ICONS

Pick-up abound in Aero's world, from the obligatory lives to discarded snacks...



These bountiful bonuses add one energy point up to six



The 1-up icon, a cute little Aero head found on high platforms



Time limits are a problem if you're looking for bonus icons



Essential at any circus and free. These give extra points



When falling, parables allow your descent considerably.



Stars are great ammo against multiple-hit enemies.



Grab the super wings and reach new heights.

Final analysis



Aero certainly has the looks, but the high frustration level reduces playability and usability.



Everything goes so well until you realize how infuriatingly hard it is I like bats too — sigh



Winner of 'Most Irritating And Frustrating Gameplay' in the next Reader Awards, maybe!

Final day score

Jon

Level six



SUPER LEAGUE

8. PRINCE OF PERSIA

10. AERO THE ACROBAT

The platform chart is where to find the best of the best and Aero joins the crop knocking Out to Lunch from a respectable ninth spot.

Sound

79

Some lovely effects, but the cacophy, cutesy tune grates after a while.

Graphics

90

A joy to watch — the Aero sprite is superb, and the backgrounds are stunning.

Playability

77

Inferentially addictive, but the control method requires a lot of patience.

Lastability

80

Loads of hidden rooms and platforms make this a lasting challenge is even the most hardened gamer.

Force factor

One of the best but most irritating platforms of the year. Well worth a look.

82



Sports

Producer.....Hudson Soft
Supplier.....Hudson Soft

Price.....TBA
Status.....Official UK release

Players.....1-2
Lives.....N/A
Continues.....N/A
Extras.....Save option

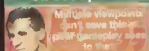
What the makers say...

Amazing graphics, great playability and three different views — Virtual Soccer is the premier football game and a must for all sports fans.
■ Hudson Soft

Controls

	Pass/tackle
	Pass/tackle
	Foul
	Chip/lob/tackle
	Nothing
	Nothing

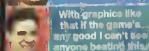
First Impression



Multiple viewpoints don't save this... your gameplay soon to them.



Diagonal perspectives and sports games definitely don't go.



With graphics like that if the game's any good I can't see anyone beating this!

First day score

Simon Continental Cup
0000000000000000

Virtual

Mud, studs, shoulder barges, late tackles and the roar of the crowd — if it's fame, fortune and football you're after, look no further...

Fancy yourself as an international soccer star? Fame, fortune, communal showers, weighty shin-pads and glittering trophies for your mantelpiece? In traditional style, Hudson Soft's latest offering isn't just a case of lacing up some boots and charging at goal — there's a wealth of options to choose from.

Before any ball-bashing commences, select one of the 24 teams available (or one of your own eight custom teams) to lead to victory. Squads are made up of 16 players, each with

There's plenty of crowd noise to egg the teams on — chanting, drum beating, applause, deflated gasps

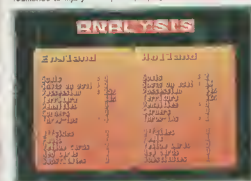
five footy skills — attack and defence ability, kick power, resilience to injury and speed (displayed as status panels in



The formation selection is crucial in a close game. Here Denmark adopt the classic 3-2-5 tactic.

the formation selection) The players' abilities can be monitored before and during matches, so substitutions can be made if necessary.

Because squads consist of players with individual skills, the computer controlled teams each respond differently. Some prefer to pass while others opt to boot the ball downfield and hope for the best (should go down a trail with Wimbledon fans). After deciding on the formation and line-up it's onto the stunning pitch selection. Matches ▶



The team analysis screen tells you everything you need to know about the game — except why you lost!



Uruguay go for the 4-4-2 providing them with a strong midfield and defence, but leaving only two forwards.

PERFECT PITCH

The three field perspectives offer a choice of styles...



Top view: great for creative passing players with vision.



Side view: ideal for a long-ball game — passing is not so easy.

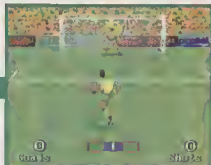


Flat View: looks good but following play becomes difficult.

Soccer



The penalty shot is one of the matches' most tense moments. Stop the needle in the centre of the bar.



The more to the left you stop it the more to the left the shot goes. Timing is all important.



He shoots, he scores! The cup goes to Brazil and while the keeper lies forlornly, the victor celebrates.

'Arcade quality graphics'



It's pretty rare for a *Soccer* game to win over a young pretender in his place. Trup, the glue-foot control is a little tough to get to grips with — especially when you've been raised on *Sensible Soccer* — but all game mode on fast and you've got an impressive arcade-style football sim in the mould of *Techina World Cup* and *Hat Trick Hero*.

Graphics are excellent. Visually this is the best soccer sim on the SNES with detailed sprites and excellent animation. The masses of different gamestyles including cups, leagues and the stunning penalty shootouts. Sound, usually the bane of sports games, is surprisingly vivid with plenty of crowd noise creating a real carnival atmosphere.

The five referees with their different interpretations of FIFA's hallowed rules allow for a wide range of late in-game tactics.

It's a shame it doesn't spot you or it could be an early bath.

Ironically, the main problem is the three different game views. While this adds variety to play, surely it would have made more sense if the programmers decided on one view and used the saved memory to improve playability. This is ultimately the downfall of *Virtua Soccer*. While it looks and sounds great enough to overawe casual soccer players and arcade junkies, control isn't crisp enough and there's not enough shot variety to recommend this to serious football fans. This slight playability problem drags down an otherwise 90% game.

83%

CROWD CONTROL

The range of options is quite stunning allowing a variety of key changes to be made. These are...



Time limit: variable. Stick to five minutes or half.



Pitch view: Top, side or flat — the choice is yours.



Game speed: beginners should start on the slow option.



Overcast: causes moderate fatigue.



Medium ground: suited to the long ball game, best.



Wet surfaces: this is the easiest surface to play on.

Rain: the ball moves slowly due to the soggy pitch.

Wind: affects the ball's flight.

Hard ground: makes passing and one-touch play tough.

Sunshine: players get tired a lot faster than normal.



Watch out for the offside trap. Here Canada attempt to play out of defence.



There's a scramble in the penalty area and the keeper is left floundering — a dead-cert goal



The card comes out, the defender is booked for a cynical tackle on the attacking team's striker.

A poor man's Sensible Soccer



The first thing I noticed about *Virtual Soccer* is the wealth of options. Just about everything is variable, from the angle of view to the weather! The view of the pitch doesn't really affect the gameplay, and it's really down to personal taste which one you choose — I personally prefer the overhead view. The weather option is a nice idea and adds variation. A number of cup and league competitions are featured and I found the computer opponents quite tough. It offers the solo player a good long-term challenge, and because there

are really poor teams — like England — to play against, you won't get bored with losing all the time. This also gives a chance to get used to the passing and shooting required to win at a higher level, though practice mode is available. Graphically, *Virtual Soccer* is nothing special, but then name a soccer game with earth-shattering graphical sound effects are quite poor and limited to the thud of the ball and the roar of the crowd when a shot hits the back of the net.

Virtual Soccer's lack of decent cosmetics could be forgiven if the gameplay was amazing, but sadly it isn't. The goals are all the same 'diagonal shot' type and this doesn't do much for the playability — after all, variation makes a sports sim. If you're a soccer nut looking for a good footy game, then check out *Sensible Soccer* — it's far more playable and fun than *Virtual*.

75%

can be played with three different views: top, side-on and 11el. Weather conditions alter players' performances — hot sun tires the teams, while rain makes the pitch slippery and reduces the ball's bounce.

Field of dreams

Both human and computer players compete in a friendly match-up as well as the min league consisting of 14 games or a four-round knockout tournament. Fast mode is an option best left to gamers with lightning fast reflexes — it's nearly twice as quick than the already frantic pace of normal mode.

During the match a wealth of skills are available: ranging from passes, hard kicks, lob, throw-ins, corner kicks and three special techniques — diving headers toward goal, flying side volleys and overhead kicks. If the opposition are giving you a hard time there's always the reliable foul technique — floor quick-footed forwards with a sweep or injury-guaranteed shoulder barge. If tackled hard, players often need medical attention.

Enduring injury

At this point two physicians run on clutching a first aid kit or, in more serious instances a stretcher to carry the injured off. The perpetrator doesn't always get away lightly — minor fouls often result in a yellow card while vicious take-downs end up with instant dismissal.

Fouls, throw-ins and any other match-affecting decisions come courtesy of the referee and there's five different types of these generally hailed 11ellas. Short-sighted to short-tempered, refs turn the tables with a single command.

If a drawn match ends after extra time, it's straight into a penalty shoot-out for the decider. Using a behind the striker perspective and a power bar dictating the kick's strength, penalty kicks are the climax of any football match. To prepare for such a nerve-racking event, use the general practise option beforehand.

Football wouldn't be the same without supporters and there's plenty of crowd noise to egg the teams on — just like the real thing. Well it is *Virtual* after all.

Left: banding the ball around the defensive wall is tough but sure produces some cracking goals.

Right: bad tackles result in the offending player being booked. Two and they're off!



WHO'S WHO

Each ref has their own distinctive personality...



This fast-back guy likes a free-flowing game so overlooks minor fouls.



This shifty looking character is keen disciplinarian so stick to the rules.



The traditional blind ref. Fatty lets you get away with murder — literally.



Don't mess with this meat head or you'll get much more than a red card.



Final analysis



The graphics look outdated and the gameplay is equally as bad, get *Sensible Soccer* instead.



Finely Mode 7 graphics perhaps, but the awkward control method ruins the dazzling potential.



Waste of space. Although presentation is great Probe should've left some memory for the gameplay.

Final day score

Simon

Won nations shield



SUPER LEAGUE



After the initial impression of the graphics and options wears off, there's simply not enough playability and testability to earn a place in the league.

Sound

74

The cheering of the crowd and the thud of the ball do their jobs well but are nothing special.

Graphics

84

Three different viewpoints and each one looks good. Scrolling is smooth, sprites are well defined.

Playability

71

Passing is more a matter of luck than timing. Gameplay soon becomes frustrating and interest wanes.

Lastability

80

Multiple viewpoints and a tough difficulty curve add life, but unfortunately it gets boring too quickly.

Force factor

An above average football game but the impending release of *Sensible Soccer* relegates it to the first division.

80

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Impact Dec 93



Shoot'em-up

Producer THQ
Supplier THQ

Price £44.99
Status Official UK Release

Players... 3
Lives... 3
Continues... 3
Extras... Password System

What the makers say...

Carnage and Mayhem will stop at nothing to rescue the hostages, smash a cruel dictator and uphold the right for freedom and democracy.

■ T+HQ

Controls

	Fire Left
	Fire Down
	Fire Up
	Fire Right
L	Missile Attack
R	Prime Time Bomb

First Impression



First day score

Chris R Level 3

8888885000

Total Carnage

Two incredibly tough men, as much artillery as you can handle, a mutant army and a mad dictator — it all adds up to Total Carnage...

Veritable towers of taut muscle and coiled sinew, these meaner than mean GIs are America's finest, known as the top secret Domsday Squad. Captain Carnage — built like King Kong on steroids, he's got 42 inch biceps, a 66 inch chest and very little brain. Trained for years in the most vicious combat techniques known, he still can't tie his own shoelaces. And Major Mayhem? He's about the same.

'General' Akhboob appeared from nowhere with a mutant army strong enough to conquer the world. Rising immediately to the position of Kookistan's sole dictator and military power, he set about taking the populace hostage with his inexhaustible supply of mutants and throwing his weight around the rest of

the world — with an aim to global domination.

This pectoral-heavy pair are the only men capable of threatening the crazed General Akhboob's plans to rule the world, but they're going to need a little help on the tactical bits (thinking and shooting at once) which is gonna have to come from you.

Akhboob! Bless you.

Your mission, as the rock-hard GIs, is to infiltrate Akhboob's territory and waste all his bio-engineered bad guys before they blow you away. In order to accomplish this, you're authorised to use the 21st century's full arsenal of weaponry which is found lying around after the dust has cleared from the carnage.

Your task has been broken down into three and a half separate legs — Alpha Mission, Baker Mission,

The Domsday Squad don't know the meaning of the word 'fear' — or 'emasculatation' or 'forcible amputation'.

CandlestickMaker Mission and a secret Fourth Mission. Locate Dog Tags for extra lives, activate temporal warps to take you back to where you left off, and

POWER CRAZY

The key to any decent shoot'em-up is power-ups and Total Carnage has more than its fair share...



Three-way shot: powerful and gives a great ranged spread of fire.



Blue flame thrower: the best weapon. Powerful but short-lived.



Shield: extremely useful and getting you out of many tight situations.



Red flame thrower: weaker than the blue version but still very useful.



Missile launcher: less powerful than the rocket launcher but fires a lot faster.



Rocket launcher: the ultimate weapon for blasting big bosses.



Standard machine gun: this beginners' weapon isn't very powerful but has unlimited bullets and fast firing.



Damage



The huge guys wielding flamethrowers are really tough to kill. Using a special weapon is essential.

THE WAR CABINET

Throughout the levels you're bombarded with special icons. Keep a look out for this lot...



Detonator: touch them in time or lose a life when they explode.



Mines: found landscape, if trodden on kill instantly.



Time bombs: powerful but for a limited time only.



Jewels: Gives points, and more points means more lives!



1-Ups: very useful! It gives a much-needed extra life.



American flag: collect these for valuable extra points



Time bomb: adds one extra time bomb to your supply.



Key: collect enough of these for a surprise letter on!



Map: gives an overview of the level and mission ahead.



Smart bomb: destroys everything on the screen.



Trains: gives your character a temporary speed boost.



Warp Zone: transports you to another area of the map.



Above: tension mounts as the huge missile launchers roll past. Don't waste time — blast them!



Left: at the end of each level a glorious close-up appears of your muscle-bound hero.



The hostages run through the bullets unharmed but still need to be saved. Rescue them for a bonus.



Success! The dictator's prize air force lies in a heap of burning metal on the runway.

'I'd buy this for a dollar'



...gripped when an impressive game, *Damage*, is a messy gun and killing people? Bring on the humanitarian society, the Red Cross, Nigel Havers — what's the world coming to? Watching tanks tear up the countryside — where are all the squirrels and mini-beasts going to live, eh?

Sorry about that bit of preaching, it's just my mum always reads first part of my comments and I'd hate to reveal my true vicarious self. Frankly, *Damage* is how games should be and I'm not keeping you on the tips of your toes, the edge of your seat, or looking rather uncomfortable. After the hilarious intro (one heroic soldier off streams of bullets) it's straight into the mayhem where *Damage* earns its name. It's sheer madness, with herds of alien ruffians flooding in from all directions some awesome armory.

After playing for so long it's effected me with gun-goo speech syndrome — kick the enemy away, kick the enemy's forehead, gun — can't remember!

What does *Damage* away from the market's umbilical cord is the next toughest hard to notice during the frenzy but they're there, particularly the power-ups — some are a bit dodgy what a great level!

No little brother Smash TV can pack its bullet-ridden bags because the real carnage has arrived and — still on my hero speech bicycle — it's a blinding parody-inducing game of insane proportions. Thank-you.

86%



Above: Let rip with the huge flamethrower, it does massive damage and looks well cool!

Left: Things don't look good! You're under attack from the right, there are hostages to be saved!

A worthy sequel



Being one of the many people who enjoyed *Super Smash T.V.* on the SNES, I've really been looking forward to *Total Carnage* — but now it's here, I'm not so sure.

The graphics aren't as polished as the original. They're rather dull and basic, and this is surprising because the first game's sprites and backgrounds were well defined and the overall look was excellent. The action is slower, notably when you're running for a power-up — it's like walking through glue. The other niggle is the slowdown occurring when the screen is packed with enemies. Sound effects are very similar to the first game with the familiar 'I love it!' speech sample and new ones thrown in for good measure. The music is pretty good, but there isn't much chance to hear it because the death and destruction drowns it out.

Presentation is, if anything, more polished than *Smash*, with excellent inter-level screens featuring the mad General Akhboob hurling insults in some foreign language — this adds a certain feel to the proceedings.

One area that *Total Carnage* improves significantly over *Smash* is the difficulty level — it's a solid challenge. The difficulty curve is pitched so you get a little further every go, and keep coming back for more. If you're looking for a no-nonsense blaster which lets you switch your brain off, your auto-fire on and don't mind the relatively poor graphics, *Total Carnage* is the game for you.

80%

always consult the map at the beginning of each mission — it provides you location, mission details and handy tips.

Alpha Mission entails landing in Kookistan Bay and engaging ground troops and rescuing any hostages you may encounter. Surveillance sorties of the area indicate large numbers of mutant ground troops, gun nests and light attack vehicles, with unconfirmed reports of scattered toxic waste barrels and mutant demons forming from puddles of green nuclear bi-product, plus plenty of hostages, flags and gemstones for points bonuses. Before leaving, you must face the humongous mutant cyborg Orcus and his anti-hero tank.

Baker Mission has you traversing the main supply road

toward Akhboob's air fields. Time bombs are the recommended weapon in this area. Trees give cover for yourself, hostages and collectibles, but keep an eye open for the flaming mutants manning Akhboob's elite force. Destroy enemy aircraft by fighting off ground troops and laying a tracer beam, allowing allied air forces to locate and bomb it.

Delta skelter

More diverse, devious and downright deadly mutants are mobilised to stop you reaching Akhboob's stronghold in CandlestickMaker Mission. The bio-nuke facility is operating from a baby-milk factory, guarded by hordes of giant spiders and 'goo-spewing huezys' amongst others. Spy photos have discovered stockpiled conventional and neutron bombs so watch your ass. Nothing else is known of this maximum security fortress, only the twisted General knows what terrors and mutant abominations lie within. The Doomsday Squad don't know the meaning of the word 'fear'. Or 'emasculation' or 'torcible amputation'. The secret fourth task, code-named Delta Mission — well, it's a secret.

The usual procedure in assignments this dangerous is to advise extreme caution, but in this case special permission has been given for a complete disregard for your own safety. Get out there and shoot big guns!



This is a section of the intro sequence — a news reporter is about to get it in the neck.



The level one boss. He's very tough and takes multiple hits — attack him from the side.



The enemy are closing in and your weapon power-up is running out — blast, blast, blast!

Final analysis



A good fun blaster to appeal to any shoot-'em-up fan. Slew for one but great fun in two-player mode!



There's over the top and there's *Total Carnage*. If you like lots of action, this is for you.



Yup, dead right. Good messy fun. Perhaps not the best looking game in the world but fun to play.

Final day score

Simon

Level four

00000287690

SUPER LEAGUE

WO'DN'T MAKE THE LEAGUE

This competent, though slightly disappointing, sequel to the ever-popular *Smash TV* fails to make the grade in this very tough league.

Sound

88

Gun blasts, explosions, growls, groans and speech from the good, the bad and the dying.

Graphics

85

Sadly lacking any real style. Fortunately, the massive and guardians improve things.

Playability

87

Its simplicity lies in *Total Carnage*'s favour. You know what you gotta do, it's just a matter of doing it.

Lastability

85

So killing all and sundry can become repetitive, but not when it's so action packed as this.

Force factor

Very demanding on the machine but the memory-hungry screen helps to be cheered.

84

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Sports

Producer_____Titus Software
Supplier_____Titus Software

Price	£49.95
Status	UK Release

Players	2
Lives	1
Continues	0
Extras	Super Scope/mouse

What the makers say...

Sets new technical standards: hyper-realistic sound effects, varied environments and artificially intelligent competitors.

■Titus Software

Controls

	Brake
	Accelerate
	Nothing
	Boost
L	Gears Down
R	Gears Up

First impression



The fast scrolling is
inerted by poor
backgrounds and
gameplay.



Nice scrolling, dodgy gameplay. I'll reserve judgment on this one.



I recognize this is **Crazy Cars 3** on the **PC541** Title, what have you done?

First day score

Chris H. D.

Lambor

Stumbling across the Saturday Night Races, short on cash, down on luck, you bet your life savings on a cross-country race. Well, what sane person walks away from easy money...?

So, there you are. Standing on the quayside having arrived in the land of opportunity itself, the United States of America. Finally here, the only thought is how to prove those wild claims to your males and become the millionaire you promised you'd be. You're going to have to use life skills wherever possible. Problem is, you only have one skill — advanced race driver training. So job prospects are

You only have one skill — advanced race driver training, so you're kind of limited in job prospects

limited. As luck would have it, an old friend turns up and sells you his Lamborghini Diablo dirt cheap, leaving six thousand of your savings to play with.

Saturday night fever

High-speed races take place all across the country, night and day, all weather, and there are always several available (marked as gold stars) on the options map. The other drivers are a reckless bunch of cusses and aren't bothered about road safety so it's necessary to visit the garage between races.

Also present is a shop to buy soup-ups for your red-hot racer. Super tyres are available, giving improved roadholding, all-important in the later matches. Snow tyres are essential for northerly races, with spikes to really grip frozen surfaces.



In one of the earlier races player one is struggling to keep the lead, his main rival still close on his heels.



Sly, Joe... and Pam: the three Demon drivers you can race as. Their names strike fear into motorway cops everywhere.

Many races have police speed traps on the course, so radar detectors and jammers are essential for eluding the law. For extra control, super ABS brakes are the perfect purchase, and extra turbos provide the extra kick to clinch that elusive top spot. Infrared goggles increase night visibility, giving the warrior an extra edge in the race for victory. Top-speed boosters give a real kick, wings double turbo duration and to separate the men from the boys' faster manual and automatic peeing systems are there for the taking.

If you've got any money left, gambling increases the pressure. One racer starts the betting and the other competitor gal a turn to pile on more cash until they run out, the trader being to keep raising the stakes just enough to keep the others interested. Wack a couple of grand on straight away and everyone bows out.

Lamborghini's main attraction is its Super Scope compatibility. From the options screen there are three Super Scope games available. Manual driving in two-player team mode sees player one driving with the joyed in socket one and player two as the gunner with the Super Scope. The car follows the Super Scope sights in one-player



The start of a city course, you're level with all rivals, but other cars hurtle past closely. Time for a nitro boost!

Lamborghini

American Challenge



Player one takes gold, while second and third place fight over the spoils.



Right: the cops are tailing you! Best make a fast exit before they give chase.



The night races have less graphical distractions, but your only clue as to cornering is following the distant tall lights.



'Are we nearly there yet?' chorus the kids as Dad curses quietly.



Pam moves from third to second via a direct hit from her sunner, with the leader already in sight and half a race to go.



A place you'll come to recognise. The local garage fixes anything in seconds for a price.



A special announcement for Super Scope players. Police have warned of mutant oranges on Route 41.

CUSTOM PARTS

The shop is full of high-powered gadgets to give you the edge — if you've got enough cash...



Tyres: a brand new set of rubbers reduces squealing skids around corners and proves invaluable in wild and wet conditions.



Nitross: for serious amounts of oosh you can leave the field trailing with replaceable turbo boost nitross. Buy these in the early rounds.



Manual Shift: the definitive gearbox for those clever folks who can drive with manual shift. It's cheaper to learn and gives more acceleration.



Distance-o-meter: this handy device upgrades your speedo to show how far you have left in each race. The cheapest item.



Automatic Shifts: a speedier gearing system for racers who either can't be bothered or just plain can't use a manual stick shift.



Armour: if you think it'd pay off to spend less in the garage, body armour lessens damage from the numerous collisions.

'Derelicts with Diablos?'



Game storylines were believable once upon a time but things have got out of hand. I think we may have reached a pinnacle with Lamborghini. A supposedly realistic driving game, based on a passing tramp flogging you his high-powered sports car? What are the scenario designers on?

This makes no difference to the game, which is a rather strange affair suffering from sluggish controls. Okay, so at 300 Kph you couldn't weave in and out of traffic too easily in real life, but being able to turn the steering wheel through more than about 90 degrees would help. It's fast with nice graphics, but the racing-buying then-racing-some-more gameplay has been overdone, spicing it up with a simple gambling feature adds interest that wanes after a couple of bets.

The Super Scope sections change the whole perspective considerably, providing a rather bland shoot 'em-up. The Scope races are so short there's no time to build team spirit! With your mass doing the driving, but it's something to do when you're tired of dodging other cars.

Lamborghini American Challenge is immaculately presented, playable but nothing too new, and the Super Scope bits are fun in the short term, but the monotonous tunes did my head in. Altogether this makes for a varied carl which would've been excellent but for the unresponsive steering and lack of features in the blasting. It gives the impression the Super Scope was remembered last minute and hastily added for extra appeal.

69%

and the fire button accelerates, and finally one-player automatic, where the driving is computer controlled. Competing against 18 professional drivers in nine duels with just four turbo boosts, the object is to finish first and destroy your opponents.

The need for speed

For those without the bazooka accessory, the Division races are against a selection of 18 other speed freaks and involve working through the easier courses until you've got enough money to upgrade your car and try the Division Race, where victory means promotion to the next of the three divisions. A league table with portraits of opponents is available, plus statistics tables for each race incorporating weather conditions, local driving talent, police activity, entry fee and prize money. However, the really big bucks are made gambling.

If you've reached division two, obtained the gear box you've been saving for and you're up against an 'old acquaintance' from a couple of races ago when your Mum calls you for tea, don't worry — the password system lets you rejoin Saturday night on Sunday morning.

Now you're prepared for the race of a lifetime, fill the tank, check the tyres, put on your driving mittens, superglue your foot to the accelerator and get ready to burn rubber — remember, no mercy.



Above: If a civilian annoys you simply ram him off the road.

Left: two-player head-to-head mode and yellow Diablo vs. Batmobile.

SPEED FREAKS

The Saturday Night League is full of deadly riders. Watch out for...



Boston: This guy's a novelty appearance only adds to his sinister image.



Denver: Kaled is a cyber-charged champion, with computer-enhanced reflexes.



Des Moines: this Sumo fashion victim's called Otomo. Percy despise his size.



Miami: Brett has a pierced right ear, a quiff and a top speed of 162 Mph. Slo-o-o down.



Nashville: from the home of Country comes Cooper, a guy with a top speed of 181 Mph.



New York: the city of muggings and murders has Felicia, a babe with a flash top speed.



One good shot in the exhaust pipe dispatches any opponent.

"Nice idea, poor execution!"



Over the last few years I've spotted a definite trend with car games. They all seem to have a flashy company endorsing it. The Lotus series on the Amiga and Jaguar XJ220 titles instantly spring to mind. Think of Lamborghini! — sleek, fast, beautifully crafted pieces of machinery, the cream of the automobile industry. Now think LAC — a clumsy, lumbering racing game that essentially fails to deliver. Graphically, LAC is nothing special. The scenery ranges from extremely outdated to laughably poor — despite numerous levels they all look the same! The city levels particularly highlight this problem. Rain and snow effects help break this up, but not to any great extent. Scrolling, on the other hand, is smooth and there's very little slowdown — unfortunately this doesn't hide the fact that the overall look of the driving section is below average. In the sound department things improve greatly. A good soundtrack accompanies the non-racing sections, helping get the adrenaline pumping but the engine effects are a letdown.

The main plus point LAC offers is the compatibility with the new Super Scope, though even with this option utilised gameplay is still a bit dull! The idea of one player driving while player two blasts the enemies off the road sounds good but doesn't quite come together. It's a case of blasting like mad and hoping for the best. Having said this, if you're really desperate for a new Super Scope game, Lamborghini certainly fits the bill. Personally, I'd strongly recommend trying before you buy!

71%

Final analysis



Overall, Lamborghini is an average game and its only redeeming value is Super Scope compatibility.



Only just above average. Considering the hype surrounding the game, this is a real disappointment.



The Scope is like an ice rink and the Super Scope modders are a waste of coding — forget it.

Final day score

Chris H

completed on normal

F I N I S H E D

SUPER LEAGUE

DIDN'T MAKE THE LEAGUE

Despite a good soundtrack and neat presentation, there's simply not enough depth in LAC to justify a Super League placing.

Sound

70

The between-screens soundtrack is pretty cool, but sound effects are very disappointing.

Graphics

68

Unoriginal scenery with still horizons disguise the fact that the scrolling is pretty groovy. Poor overall.

Playability

70

Frustrating at times and laughable at others, it's easy to pick up.

Lastability

67

Because the shooting sections are so hit-and-miss you're soon bored. Driving sections are just as bad.

Force factor

An ambitious title with plenty of features, but dented by dodgy control and limited use of the Super Scope.

70

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Shoot-'em-up

Producer.....Vic Tokai
Supplier.....Vic Tokai

Price.....£49.99
Status.....Official UK release

Players.....1
Lives.....7
Continues.....0
Extras.....None

What the mekers say...

This game isn't for the light-hearted. You have to be nimble fingered and quick off the mark to survive this dual — satisfaction guaranteed.

■ Vic Tokai

Controls

	Fire
	Jump
	Special
	Toggle fire
L	Nothing
R	Nothing

First impression

	Average graphics and sound are made up for by a very challenging game.
	Compared to <i>Super Probotector</i> this looks awful but Simon put it down.
	Eurgh! The graphics look like an NES version of <i>Super Contra</i> .

First day score

Simon Level two
26/30/20

Timesl

Desperate aliens plan to conquer the earth and only one time-hopping warrior can stop them. Are you up to the challenge?

They're big, they're 'ard and God are they ugly, but the Tirmatians have a problem on their alien hands — their distant planet faces imminent destruction. As their world moves ever nearer a huge time void, the Tirmatians have no alternative but to find and invade another world. And what better choice could the aliens make than the humble planet Earth? Water, compatible atmosphere, pension schemes — an idyllic abode. To ensure their invasion meets no resistance, the Tirmatians use time-travel technology to attack at points in history when man was ill equipped to fight back.

Selected levels seat our hero on a fast jet bike, screaming past multi-perallax scrolling areas with flying alien hordes to shoot down.

Fortunately, mankind becomes aware of the Tirmatians' plot for invasion, and sends its own unit back in time to counter-attack.

Time of your life

The Tirmatians blitz the time-travel base, butchering soldiers before they've even taken a travel sickness tablet. Despondent, mankind sits back and awaits the painful, drawn-out death looming on the horizon. Except for... Dr Vincent Gilmash — a herdsman soldier who kills first, asks questions later, continues killing, and makes up the answers. Does he care for his own safety? Not a chance! With a bullet-stuffed rifle and muscles that



Vincent hits the deck setting an Egyptian mummy on fire. Power-ups become essential in the later levels.

would frighten Geoff Capes (and all his mates), Vincent decides to act on mankind's behalf — how thoughtful.

Starting in Medieval England, Gilmash must wipe out the Tirmatian population and continue hopping in and out of the time elope to fight the next wave.

During the 21 levels, he visits the Jurassic period, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Rome and present day Earth with the final encounter taking place on Timet, home of the alien menace.

Slip of the tongue

Levels consist of side-on scrolling shoot-'em-up action switching to vertically scrolling as Vincent scales walls to reach higher ground. But he's not restricted to running on foot. Selected levels seat our hero on a fast jet bike, screaming past multi-perallax scrolling areas with flying alien hordes to shoot down.



This Tirmatian holds a shield if you get too close. The only way to kill the critter is to blast him from long range.



Watch out for crates placed on the ground. Give 'em a few blasts and they reveal weapon power-ups.

ip



Return Of The Jedi meets *BMX Bandit*! The jet bike levels are quick and deadly — use the rear fire as much as possible.



A city ravaged by war with armed beggars loitering the industrial yards. Show no mercy here.



The arrows are a subtle hint as to what to do. Stay in the middle and you don't get blown away.

'Insanely difficult!'



This has to be one of the hardest video games I've ever played — wave after wave of alien scum rush onto the screen from all directions and every one of them stops at nothing to kill you. If this isn't difficult enough, you only get seven lives to complete the whole game because there are NO credits or continues!

On reflection, *Time Slip*'s testability and playability are its biggest selling points. This is no bad thing, because cosmetically it's not exactly brilliant. I don't mean *Time Slip* looks terrible, it's just it's not as good as similar games of the genre — *Super Probotector* instantly springs to mind — it's a little outdated. The graphics look unfinished and ragged at times and the animation (on the main sprite particularly) is jerky in places. Sound is average with a suitably beefy tune pounding as you lay hundreds of aliens to waste, and it varies from level to level. Spot effects are disappointing, with only the gun blast and the huge roar of the giant end-of-level badasses for salvation.

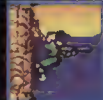
All in all, *Time Slip* is no game for the beginner. I'm an above average gamer, and I had enormous trouble getting past the second spender-bike section. If you like shoot-'em-ups and really want to test your playing skills to the limit, *Time Slip* is a good choice, but don't expect to be dazzled by the graphics or blown away by the sound.

81%



Left: walls, floors, ceilings — you name it, cannon turrets are there. Keep ducking at all times.

Below: Vincent takes to the hills. Blast the enemy cannons before continuing the ascent.



TIME TO DIE

Time Slip is full of wicked guardians. Here's a run-down on the violent minions you can expect...



Boss 1: a gentle introduction. To kill this snake use the wall to avoid the flames then leap down and fire at the serpent's mouth.

Boss 2: an armoured knight guards the castle remains with his life. Blast his shield, arms, head and body in order.



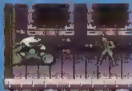
Boss 3: kiss your lives goodbye as you battle this monstrosity. Don't bother ducking, just get in there, grit your teeth and fire.

Boss 4: jump between platforms, firing upward to destroy old lizard lips. Lightning reflexes are definitely essential.



Boss 5: on the jet bike section the task's to waste the back end of this ship. Unfortunately it's laden with missiles and lasers.

Boss 6: dodge the rotating orbs and plummet the core with lead. The key is to keep moving and stay in the spot.



Boss 7: a robot on tracks that just loves company so it can kill them! Blast the millions of metal spheres before aiming for the droid's body.

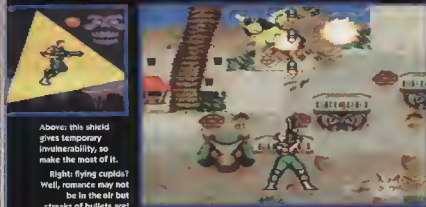
Boss 8: stray too near the tweezers of this mutated insect and you feel the bite. Instead keep your distance point at the mutch's chops and blast.



► The alien army consists of a variety of forms, all potentially lethal and not in the most agreeable of moods. Not only are there loathsome Tirmatians to contend with (complete with big guns), but also droide, Rock Men, Tirmatian Gods, dinosaurs, automated laser turrets and not forgetting the mid- and end-of-level killer custodians. These fearless warriors take the shape of knights, mutant caterpillars, dragons — it's a fierce force to be reckoned with but then again, Dr. Oligameah has always liked the odds stacked against him. Not that it's a complete suicide mission, helpful pick-ups provide Vince with bazookas, grenades, shields and time bombs (which slow down time). Collectables are incredibly important if the Doc is to successfully get through the area alive. Enemies don't die after a solitary hit, several take a bounty of bullets and Vince only has seven lives to serve him throughout the entire game. There's no continue in *Timeslip* — this is a real man's war.



Left: one of the first bosses Vincent meets. Coupled with a big gun and the ability to fire, the quicker it's killed the better.



Above: this shield gives temporary invulnerability, so make the most of it.

Right: flying cupids? Well, romance may not be in the air but streaks of bullets are!

'As tough as old boots'



Yep, it's official. *Time Slip* is one of the hardest shoot-'em-ups I have ever played. My old boots really do pale in comparison to the toughness awaiting in the 21 levels. It's unashamedly difficult — Kunitzian aliens throw grenades, missiles and even themselves into the path of Vincent who can do little but cover and fire bullets in all directions in a vain attempt to escape unharmed. Simple, ordinary aliens take an uncountable amount of bullets to die, in which time another troop of aliens have ganged up.

Cluttered is one word to describe the playing arena. Graphically, *Time Slip* is hardly a deluxe of colours. No definite style grabs the eyes and backgrounds rarely whip up any atmosphere. Then again, no matter how many times you die there's a strange attraction saving it from doom. Though the body count is high, the frustration factor is pinched at just the right level so you don't give up altogether. The ridiculous odds here can't be criticised — a tanorous challenge to try the best of the best.

Neckon you're a bit fast when it comes to fancy shootin'? Hah, get some *Time Slip* in your bloodstream and think again! It's just above average in every department except for playability, making it a winner with anyone who likes implacable death in the extreme — karpow, boom, die alien scum!

79%

PASSING THE TIME

War-ups are vital on this mission. Check these out.



Rapid fire: this real enhancer streams out lines of lead super fast.



Grenades: wipe out aliens with damaging grenades — a sure-fire hit.



Diamonds: these glittering gems produce healthy high scores.



Rocket launcher: a real massive weapons weakling.



Slow down: this strange concoction revitalises your brain power.

Final analysis



One of the toughest games I've ever played, this will keep you going for months — guaranteed!



As tough as they make 'em, no decent continues and no two-player option. Sour grapes all round!



A real toughie, but the graphics are somewhat basic. Too much like all the other shoot-'em-ups.

Final day score

Simon

Level five

320103

SUPER LEAGUE

DIDN'T MAKE THE LEAGUE

With so many fabulous shooting games in the league, frustrating gameplay and poor graphics confine *Time Slip* to the wastelands.

Sound

72

An okay soundtrack, varies from level to level, but the poor spot effects let it down.

Graphics

73

Quite poor by today's standards, although they do their job and there's no sprite slowdown.

Playability

82

Instantly playable due to its simplistic nature and proves quite good fun.

Lastability

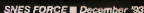
82

An extremely tough challenge to keep any shoot-'em-up lover playing for ages, may get a little tedious.

Force factor

Poor graphics but the 'just one more go' syndrome and tough difficulty curve make for a mild challenge.

80



ot

in any order but the final showdown must be last. The battery back-up allows five separate games to be saved and played at a later date. Two-player consists of 15 scenarios which can't be saved.

Each scenario takes place on a map made up of hexagons. Units such as troops, tanks, aircraft and ships are represented by icons and can be moved a certain number of hexagons each turn depending on the terrain and fuel available. While commandos can cover distances quickly, armoured tanks are much slower and unable to cross large dunes. In the standard game each player can move three units per turn though this can be altered via the options menu. When all three moves have been made, control goes to the opponent and play continues in this fashion.

In the heat of battle

Once a unit has been selected, the distance it can move is automatically highlighted. If a move leaves a unit adjacent to an enemy, battle may commence. A new screen appears showing a re-enactment of the encounter and eventual outcome.

Battles can be either short or long. The former is for those who'd rather leave the fighting to the computer and get on with the devious tactics. Long combat is split into four rounds offering the chance of attacking, defending or the coward's way out — retreat.

First the aggressor makes a move before control passes to the defendant to reply. Control then

'Blockbusters with napalm'



Chris

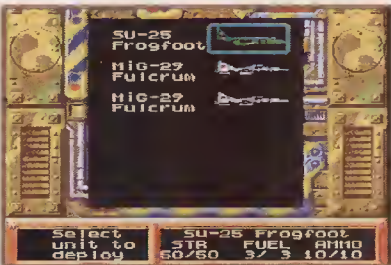
Take one look at the packaging and you'd be forgiven for thinking *Conflict* is another in a long line of instantly-forgettable war sims. Lurking beneath the shabby presentation and the Blockbuster-style honeycomb play area is however, an enjoyable and, dare I say it, fun strategy game.

The *Risk* meets *General Chaos*-style gameplay is short on thrills in a player mode, lacking the strategic depth of the former or the madcap fun of the latter. However, switch to a two-player game, set battle mode to long, grab an arch-rival and you're in for a great laugh blowing each other to bits.

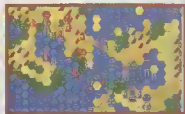
The overall *as-is* in *City*-style graphics aren't outstanding but more than adequate and are ably supported by an assortment of atmospheric sound effects — a band of battle-weary snare drums.

There's plenty of playability and enough variety in scenarios and campaigns to ensure long-term stability — Simon and I have been playing all week and it's caused no end of arguments. Although too slow for arcade fans in search of an adrenaline buzz, hard-core campaigners can while away many a rainy Sunday afternoon discussing tactical manoeuvres. One to stick on dad's Christmas list.

81%



Above: the MiG-29 Fulcrum is the fastest plane available, though it takes as many hits as the SU-25.



The overview map gives a chance to look at the battle as a whole, perfect for devising strategies.



Victory is yours and your commanding officer is the first to salute your achievement.

► returns to the perpetrator who now has to weigh up the new variations to the scenario. This is a much more realistic, although long-winded option.

Stat attack

Attacking ensures your units die, but they are susceptible to maximum damage if their onslaught is returned. A defensible unit has a 50% chance of making an attack, but only takes 50% damage if hit by the aggressors. The Retreat option can take more than one chance to complete but can save your unit's skin. There's no chance of being and 75% damage taken if hit, but when an infantry unit is attacked by an armoured tank retreat is the only option.

After a battle, count your losses, then estimate how long it'll take to replenish them and get to the nearest base to retreat and recruit. Such strategic locations are dotted throughout the map and, once captured, help revise the campaign. Cities provide excellent cover and allow running repairs to be made. Factories produce extra forces, airports deploy planes and helicopters while Naval bases give a HQ from which to launch a sea offensive or retreat.

Production points may also be allocated, determining how fast factories regenerate by limiting or increasing the number of factories in a scenario. It's all here — tactics, the heat of action and the chance to blow up a mate. Strap yourself in, keep your head down and your trigger finger handy — the battle's on. ■

BLOCK BUSTERS

In war, it's fair — but here's a chance to cheat...



Airport: capturing this gives control of any planes in the hangars.

Cities: these give armies a chance to 'dig in', making them twice as hard to hit.

Factories: the place to construct new weapons. Guard them with your life.

Final analysis



Best played in the fun two-player mode, graphically bad but with a mate it's a real laugh!



One graphics but the gameplay is seriously addictive. I always finish looking worse than everything.



Engrossing strategy and great fun in two-player, it's easy to ignore the average graphics.

Final day score

Chris R

scenario six completed

THE LEVEL 6

SUPER LEAGUE

9. WING COMMANDER 2

10. SUPER CONFLICT

Although slow for one, the fun two-player option allows Super Conflict to enter this competitive chart. But for how long?

'Boring for solo players'



When *Super Conflict* came into the office I had a brief glance at the packaging and dropped it like a hot brick — games like this never appeal to me, and this one seemed like pure boredom.

To an extent, this is true of *Super Conflict*. One-player mode is very dull, and unless you really enjoy planning a battle strategy and spending an hour or so carrying the plan out, you'll find this option a complete turn off. Two-player mode is a different matter altogether — gameplay is a lot more fun when you can hurt abuse at your mate as he wastes your best tank platoon, Chris Rice and I have had a number of games through the week and there's nothing more satisfying than ambushing an opponent as they move in for the kill.

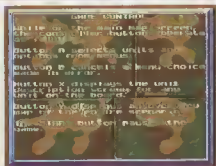
Graphically, *Super Conflict* is at best quite poor by today's standards, with samey backgrounds — the only variable is the map layout. The sound effects are disappointing.

If you're a single player, steer clear of this mind-numbingly boring cart. If you've got a mate around and enjoy a thought-provoking test of strategy, *Super Conflict* may surprise you.

75%



The T-55 tank platoon is excellent for taking out squadrons of commands.



The last screen you see before all out battle commences, gives a brief description of the controls.



A MIG-29 squadron takes off on a bombing raid over an enemy factory plant. Will it ever return...?

Sound

79

A atmospheric range of sound effects though the lightweight soundtrack is disappointing.

Graphics

77

Overhead board game-style play areas broken up with colourful combat sequences.

Playability

82

Slow to start though later campaigns are more varied and exciting. Two-player mode is more fun.

Lastability

83

Lots of levels to conquer and unlimited challenge in two-player mode. Quickly gets boring for one.

Force factor

An interesting twist on a conventional strategy theme to mid-90s war campaigns.

79

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Choose your tyres to suit the conditions. Try out Slicker high-performance Pirelli wet-weather slicks for high speed wet track handling.



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CHRISTMAS

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GAMES - JAMMED WITH
TWICE THE PROGRAMMING
HORSEPOWER OF THE
ORIGINAL TOP GEAR.

KEMCO

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WORDTRIS

Puzzle

Producer.....Atari/Press
Supplier.....MicroPress

Price.....\$44.99
Status.....Official UK release

Players.....1 or 2

Continues.....None
Extra.....None

What the makers say...

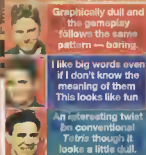
Wordtris not only tests your skill and coordination, but also your creativity and vocabulary skills.

MicroPress

Controls



First impression



Graphically dull and the gameplay follows the same pattern — boring.

I like big words even if I don't know the meaning of them. This looks like fun.

An interesting twist on conventional Tetris though it looks a little dull.

First day score

Fun.....None
Graphics.....C
Gameplay.....C
Value.....C

Wordtris

**Bored with beat-'em-ups?
Sick of shoot-'em-ups?**
Wordtris is a different kind of game entirely — are you up for the challenge?

One of the all-time classic video games is *Tetris*, a simplistic game that made sickie backs as fashionable as a slickie brick. The Russian-themed building game spawned various bandwagon jumpers on several formats — *Bombitis*, *Welltris*, *Chrysakists*. Well, keep a dictionary or close hand because those games aren't half as chock-a-block as *Wordtris*.

Cool your minds back to when *Tetris* was in its heyday. Can you picture the tiles falling down as the time ticks away? Remember, if you don't fit the blocks together the stack fills up the screen which leads to the game being over. *Wordtris* is a

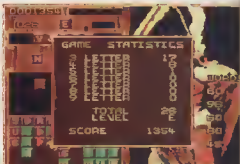
A lettered block falls from the top of the playing area and when a word is

l s s s s

thinking man's *Tetris* where instead of peeing together awkward shaped blocks, letters need linking to form words. A lettered block falls from the top of the playing area and when a word is formed (either vertically or horizontally) the blocks used vanish, allowing space for the other falling blocks to be moved around.

Dirty words

Upon slamming in the circus-themed cart a choice of five game-altering options appear. Game mode offers the playing style and incorporates Single-Player mode, a fight to the death against the computer. Fair more fun is Competitive, a two-player versus mode where both players try to outscore each



After completing a level, you're given a rundown on words made and how many letters in each.

other Tournament has up to three competitors alternately playing identical single-player games — whoever makes the highest scoring words wins. If rivalry's not your thing, grab a mate and play Co-operative, where teamwork earns points.

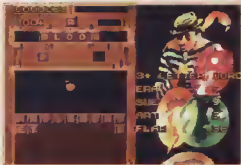
Difficulty offers the minimum number of letters needed to score, ranging from three to seven. The Next Tile option comes in pretty useful, especially when the screen gets crowded, as it allows for more carefully planned words. These are ten difficulty levels, labelled A-J, which progressively affect the rate at which the blocks

fall from a steady build up to an immediate letter downpour. The time limit can be toggled on or off and players wanting an extra challenge can turn off the Repeat option — any words already spelled out in the game aren't removed.

Wordbliss?

The screen takes the form of a well with water rising the bottom. The tiles fall and float on the surface until another lands on top, pushing the previous one under. It's not a bottomless tank, and if a line reaches the bottom, tiles circling toward the roof of the well.

In addition to the regular letter blocks, surprise icons drop from the heavens. Cherry Bombs blow up



Bombs are useful for knocking out one block, always get rid of a letter that's hard to use — Q or X for example.



This is two-player mode and the action is really hotting up. It's a race against time to make the key word — yield.

his



Above: The high score table, and Simon's on top with a pitiful 4,354.

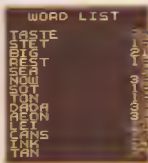
Right: Wow! SNES FORCE. How many points do you get for spelling that.



Someone tell that lion there's a woman in his mouth! The various digitised pictures help spice up the action.



The well is filling up to dangerous proportions — things don't look good.



A list of words made and their scores appear at the end of a stage.



That's it! The magic word! The screen now clears completely and a massive points bonus is awarded.

'Scrabble-tastic'



I know that many of you who work in the CE office may disagree, but I think *Wordtris* is a well-presented, enjoyable game. When things are pretty slow, it's easy to construct big point-scoring words, but when it speeds up to a frantic pace it's still fun seeing all the words you've made completely by accident. It can be especially when you've spent ages getting the components (see? big word!) of a huge word together, only to see part of it going into lesser-scoring term.

The music is great, and the stills accompanying the action are clear and crisp. If a little sensitive to animal lovers. The in-game visuals are functional, not spectacular, but what does a game like this need? Certainly not flesh, bright graphics distracting you from the game! What games like this rely on is substance, something all too rarely seen in console carts today. Well, I remember when I was a kid we argued over who was the best, becoming Chris Alca!

All in all, it's not the most enduring of games, but it's very well executed. It's an admirable attempt at an ambitious idea, and one I thoroughly appreciated. It's not flawless — go halves with a mate if you've got some spare cash lying around. Better still, get them to buy it. If you enjoy using your brain once in a while, *Wordtris* could be the game for you.

70%



WORD UP

There are four different gametypes, each affecting gameplay. Mastering them all is the key to success although a dictionary comes in handy...



you
pay
on-
er



you
pay
on-
er



you
pay
on-
er



you
pay
on-
er

SAY IT WITH WORDS...

To be a success at *Wordtris* you need an eye for words and a lust for points. There are a massive 600 points of eteke for spelling wild. Here's how to do it...



When trying to make a magic word start on one side of the well...



...put any letters that don't fit into the magic word to the left.



Then wait for the right letters to fall, making full use of the wild tile

► the first life hit, useful for dispersing awkward Qs and Xs. Dynamite Sticks destroy four tiles in a row, especially useful for tidying cluttered areas of screen. After six to nine letter words are made. Acid Beakers drop down, melting entire columns of tiles on contact. If you're in a fix — and need one more letter to spell 'antidisestablishmentarianism', pray for a Wild Card — they can be substituted for any letter by zipping through the alphabet using the [A] and [B] buttons.

As every game is about winning (never mind the 'taking part that counts' phrase), to get the high scores there are several bonuses to aim for. Points are awarded depending on the length of the word and the letters it contains. For instance, if you manage to spell 'QUICHUA' (there's a prize for the first person to write in explaining its meaning) a higher score is achieved than for 'RAT'. At the end of each wild a special word is displayed, form this and the entire screen is cleared of blocks and one titanic bonus is gained.

Progressing through the levels means completing a certain number of words. Stage A requires five words while later stages definitely have a genius player in mind with 25 words needed — quite a feat considering the rate at which the tiles descend.

If you're looking for fast, furious word-making fun, *Wordtris* is the game for you. Grab your dictionary, thumb through your thesaurus — it's a game to make your bathroom tiles feel quite undereducated.



Reactions need to be quick or the well soon fills up.



Don't worry if you're no scholar — simply select novice mode.

'Words fail me!'



Words remain good at school (big five teachers and pupils of Adams' comprehensive. Went who knew stew in the broth of their lives) and even though the favoured everyone but me (I'm a journalist now, Mr. I managed to string together a few letters to form those and actually pass the exam! So naturally I took to in hand to record the rest of the term for my of big words — like 'quack' and 'bedridden'.

These infants who learn English at primary school via bits of life and a envelope in which to keep them, you'll sense a similarity when Wordtris — basically, pure luck in matching up words that make sense. Its like used to say 'it only takes one intelligent guess to open the gate and let out of the flock' (she was a bit teary-lumpy you see) and one tiny error in Wordtris could have been a well thought out game of thoughts to think about. It's a game Level one is alright because the slow speed enables you to form words of but later on, shoving the blocks anywhere is all that's needed. Nine lines out and you've got a word without looking at it, with the graphics solid or crude and the excellent music which doesn't annoy puzzle games and grating tunes usually go and in handy it gets top marks for presentation. Unfortunately when you realise it's easier to place tiles randomly than figure out complex words you can't help feeling apathetic — what a pity.

62%

Final analysis



With luck getting you better scores than skill it's disappointing for a supposed game of wit.



A very boring cart to appeal to people who can't get enough of the board game Scrabble!



True, it's easy to score accidentally, but if you try using skill it's fun. An admirable effort.

Final day score



10000

SUPER LEAGUE

DON'T MAKE THE TOP TEN

Wordtris didn't score — charge because of lack of anything special. Looks like the word, in fact — straight!

Sound

75

Catchy tunes and above average effects, never grate the nerve endings.

Graphics

68

Functional 'action' graphics and pleasant side-screen stills. Nothing spectacular.

Playability

58

Easy to pick up and easy to put down again. Seriously, this is far too frustrating to recommend.

Lastability

55

Once you realise higher scores are gained by just letting tiles drop, it quickly loses its appeal.

Force factor

65

For die-hard fans of the gamemate, an essential addition to your collection. For others, think before buying.



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S-FORCE DEC



Delivery

Amazed, enraged, troubled or confused? If you've got something on your mind, don't just sit there — drop us a line. We're never too busy to lend a helping hand.

A league of its own?

First I would like to say that your mag is far superior to the others I read. You don't just include heaps of reviews but interviews as well which are cool. The SuperLeague™ is the best idea seen on any mag, partly because it sorts out which games are better and it gives you an idea of what game to get next without hesitation.

One thing other mags lack is other reviewers giving their opinions. Your mag has four or five reviewers on one game so you don't have to hope one person comes up with a decent enough review. This gives you a massive advantage.

Your rating is also decent because you don't go over the top like other mags tend to do, I won't waste too much time but I do have some questions.

1. I've read in other mags that the official price for *Street Fighter II Turbo* is around £68! Can you tell me what price you are expecting?

2. In your brill mag I was studying the moves for *Mortal Kombat*. Are they the same as the arcade version? I don't want to make a fool of myself doing the wrong combinations!

3. Please advise me on what game to wait for and buy next.

4. What's the best game on the SNES for each reviewer in the SNES FORCE team?

■ Danos Pargotta, Harrow.

PS. Congratulations on the best mag ever and keep those sorted interviews coming in. They're brilliant!

1. *SFII Turbo*'s official UK price is £59.99. Pay no more for it.

2. Yes.

3. As you said, the Super League is a listing of our own favourite games, but from the last couple of issues we'd recommend (considering you've probably got *Turbo* by now)... *Flashback* for something serious, maybe *Sunset Riders* or *Super Empire* for action and *Mr Nutz* for a good laugh.

4. Hayward *Turbo*. St: *Turbo*. Chike: *Top Gear*.

Ricey: *Turbo*. Brutford: *Mario Kart*. Will: *Shadowrun*.

Will

Blah blah blah

Your mag is excellent! Blah blah blah. Could you please answer those questions?

1. Is there going to be a *Super Street Fighter II*?

2. Is *Lemmings* any good on the SNES?

3. Is *Jurassic Park* value for money?

4. What is the best driving game on the SNES?

5. My dodgy mate reckons there's a cheat on SNES *Mortal Kombat* for blood. He says to do it when Goro hits the Acclaim logo, the background goes red and you hear 'Mortal Kombat'. Is there such a cheat?

6. Do you fall asleep while playing *Sim City*?

Thanks a lot dudes!

■ Christopher Morria

PS I have come to the conclusion that Will is an alien. A sex-changing alien. Tell Simon that my mate thinks he's no good at *SFII Turbo*. My mate's best!

1. Yes. It's out in the arcades in London and spreading across the country. We have no official confirmation but I reckon it'd be safe to bet your house, your immediate family and your girlfriend on a SNES version appearing at some point.

2. If you like the other versions, then yup.

3. Well, the film cost sixty-odd million dollars which could've been spent on funding the third world or helping Bosnian refugees but instead went to an already rich Mr Spielberg and the incredibly affluent Universal Picturax and dozens of lovely effects with no plot. So I'd say probably not. But the game's pretty cool (see issue Five of SNES FORCE for the review).

4. For realistic racing, *Nigel Mansell's* or one of the *Top Gear* series, but overall there is no contest — *Mario Kart*!

5. Certainly not. Sorry.

6. Invariably.

As for your mate, Simon says 'I'm really worried. Come anywhere near Shrewsbury and I'll whip yours and your mother's ass!' As for me being a sex-switching ET, I can't really deny it, the others had their suspicions and yea it's true — I am Rammo. Unfortunately, due to Ludlow's hot and humid climate (shyeah, right) I'm stuck half-way. Causes endless trouble at the swimming pool, I can tell you.

Jojo

Kombat kwerries

I got a SNES for my birthday in August with *Starwing* (which I compiled in six days with an average of

97%) and I was wondering whether there is anywhere I can get hold of a box. Also I got *Mortal Kombat* a few days ago, and I've read your review and used the cards and now I can do most of the moves for all the people, so thanks for that. The main reason I'm writing is to ask if you can answer these few questions (here we go!)

1. I was playing *MK* the other day and I came across a person in a green suit (you should already know because you answered Austin's letter in issue five), and I was wondering if there was a replay cheat or an ordinary cheat to play this person. Also, can you tell me a replay cheat for infinite energy or anything else!

2. Are there any cheats for *Desert Strike*, because I keep on dying, and I know where all the extra lives are so it's down to the replay cart.

3. Is it possible to use the replay cart on *Mario Kart* because when I use the parameters screen the screen goes all orange. Is it my cart or the replay cart that I have got (I have got the latest one)?

I have purchased all the issues of SNES FORCE, and I hope you keep churning out the goods like you have for the past five issues for many years to come. Please, please, please, please answer my questions and print this letter!

Yours hopelity

■ A Moorcroft, Caxton Donington, Dorby.

1. Look In the Code Collection, all our codes are in there.

2. Look In the Code Collection, all our codes are in there.

3. Look In the Code... er, sorry, no you can't use an Action Replay on *Mario Kart* because it's got a protection chip.

Jojo

Mass martyr

Great magazine you have here. Keep up the good work. This letter isn't for myself, but for others who have bought Import games for the SNES. I've a few questions to ask.

1. Why do you not print more replay codes for import games?

2. What's the difference between Jap, USA & UK games for playability?

Before I go please could you send me or print some replay codes for *Final Fight 2* (Jap version) and *Super Ghouls & Ghosts* (also Jap version). I question two seems silly please overlook my time of ignorance for I have only had my SNES for about a month. I'm just a babe in arms, so to speak.

Yours faithfully

■ Brian Harper, Taunton, Somerset.

1. We'd love to print loads of codes for Importers

cards, but the code lists and updates we get from Datel and Hornby usually include some US version cheats but no Jap codes. So we have to rely mainly on people sending in import codes they've discovered themselves. If anyone wants to send us a large sack of Christmas codes we'd be grateful enough to brighten their new year with five crisp tanners.

2. There's not usually any difference between different versions of the same game, but this provides a golden opportunity for some sweeping generalisations about foreign games. Japanese releases are nearly always gut wrenchingly cute, and they go for lots of RPGs (no good on import unless you can read Japanese) and much simpler platform fare livened up with ridiculous and bizarre graphics. Most US games end up on these shores sooner or later, the few we don't get are mostly American sports sims (basketball, baseball etc) for the simple reason that yanks never tire of them but they don't go down well over here.

We have no codes for FF2 Jap, and, sadly, none for Japanese *Ghouls & Ghosts* either.

Simon

Be Sensible

We think your magazine is rubbish. The reason for this is you review and award games, you should review games like *Sensible Soccer*.

■ Darren and Steven, Cheshunt, Herts

PS. What do you think *Sensible Soccer* will be like?

Sad games? *Cool Spot*, *Super Empire*, *Sunset Riders...*, as for *Sensible Soccer*, its release date has been put back to January as alterations are being made. What would you like us to do? Review an unfinished game?



In the meantime why not wet your appetite by checking out this screen shot than turning to our *Sensible Soccer* feature on page 24.

Chris B

Overpriced junk?

Your mag is the best on sale! The rating system is tough and you review all the top games.

Your *Street Fighter II Turbo* solution really worked for me and made the game even easier to complete on level seven.

In issue Three you reviewed *Bubba The Bobcat* and just after that I played it. It's just like you said it was, good for a while but not very lasting.

You have made the presentation of your mag look like a program or a life type thing. It is different to other mags, they look untidy and like comics, however, your mag is like a new generation.

The mag really tells the truth about games or, as George from London said, 'no bullshit'.

When do you think about Tetris? Fun and Games Ideas? I think people will be put off because it looks like Nintendo can't sell games for 'rip off prices'.

Letter of the month

I am writing to you to offer some new suggestions which could be included in the magazine. Firstly, I wish to congratulate you on your Super League, the excellent presentation and clarity of prose, the easiness of the combos, the explanations you give and finally the accuracy of your ratings system.

My suggestions are as follows:

A monthly review of where games either import or official can be bought at the cheapest prices, and what deals they are doing (e.g. collector stamp cards at Virgin and Our Price).

The news section should cover important developments in the console industry (e.g. 3DO and Atari's latest machines, as we should all be informed).

Directory Enquiries should include the price of the game, and the six page spread should be condensed into around three pages as it's nothing new and just a reference. The Code Collection should only print new codes and tips and then every six issues print them all to keep our readers happy.

A puzzle page could be included, especially quizzes as these would broaden the knowledge of younger readers, to older games etc. Prices should be awarded.

Unfortunately, I may not be the best critic of your magazine as along with the other six Nintendo mags, I will buy yours faithfully every month.

■ Andrew 'A'

PS. Thank you for not making the success of your magazine based on slepping matches with Sega and cheap language like 'Monkey-Aes' — NMS.

Thanks for the letter, Andrew. Glad you like the Super League. We've gone one-step further and given it a complete overhaul to provide you with even more information.

We've researched the 'grey' import scene in depth and were considering presenting our findings as a feature. However, due to the fluctuating nature of some importers' price, by the time the magazine got onto the shelves our information would be inaccurate. While we're all snes crazy, I agree it's essential to keep in touch with developments on other formats — check out the extensive 3DO coverage in issue five — but remember, this is a *SNES* magazine!

We like your Code Collection idea and I can assure you we'll be having plenty of lengthy discussions to find exactly the right way to bring your suggestions in to effect.

Because we're primarily a games magazine, any laughs, giggles, mirth, merriment or indeed, entertainment of any description gleaned from perusing these pages is a miraculous coincidence. I dunno though, being a puzzle mag would be great excuse to put a sultry, pouting babe in a swimsuit on the cover every month. Yes, hmmm...

Chris B

so they make them cheaper, but on the other hand, more carts will be sold.

Is Nintendo a better company than Sega? Sega has more consoles etc, but I think the snes beats everything Sega has done — even the Mega CD! What do you think?

I think you should have weekly comic's like game tournaments and game giveaways.

I enjoyed *Street Fighter II Turbo* Edition and I think it would be good to have it printed weekly.

Could you answer some of my questions.

1. Can you put a poster in your mag?
2. Can you redo the *Mario Kart* solution?
3. Can you put the price of your mag down?
4. Is Amiga better than snes or MegaDrive?
5. Can you open some membership club?
6. Do you agree with Nintendo prices?
7. What do you think they should be?
8. How soon will 'Fun & Games' take to be successful?
9. Will *SFII Turbo* and *Mortal Kombat* prices go down?
10. Is there a cheat for *Mortal Kombat* gore?
11. Please publish this and answer my questions! Thanks for reading and I hope your mag continues to go well and have such a good spirit!

Thanks again...

■ Darren Trusler, Worthing, Sussex.

PS. Can you do a pen pal sort of thing for the public, writing to Simon Hill, Chris Hayward, and Will Evans?

We like Tetris's Fun & Games budget label idea very much. With today's extortionate prices still rising and Nintendo exacting more control over the games on their machines, this could give old games a new lease of life and help re-ensure the snes's already golden future.

Having played the hottest new titles the Mega-CD has to offer (thanks to our alstar Sega mag)

we have come to a decision. Due to the fact that some of the games look nice but none of them are engaging in any way to play, the official SNES FORCE verdict: overpriced junk. *Street Fighter II Turbo Edition* was an ad, you can thank the nice people at TCR Computer Exchange for running it.

1. Soon. Be patient...
2. It'd be unfair on the loyal readers who bought the first few issues. If you want the full benefit of Simon's Karting skills you'll have to get back issue — for more information call 051 357 1275.
3. We'd love to.
4. Mega Drive maybe, but snes? No way! Sadly, it seems Home Computers are on the way out.
5. If enough people are interested, we'd love to.
6. We'd like to see them lowered, along with Jet from Gladiators' leard.
7. Free on the NHS.
8. If, indeed, it is successful, the next twelve months or so will see Fun & Games rise or fall.
9. Not while people are still queuing up to buy them.
10. For the last time Noooooooo!
11. You're welcome.

Unfortunately, we're far too busy with the magazine to reply to individual letters. But do write, we adore hearing your comments. We couldn't increase the size of the mag without putting the price up, but we're open to suggestions on whether you'd pay more for a bigger mag. We started with a special introductory price, but we're still the best value for money mag around.

Chris B

Put pen to paper and share your views, woes and games with us at: Special Delivery, SNES FORCE Impact Magazine, Ludlow Shopping, SY8 1JH.

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There's only way to guarantee a full year of complete and unbiased coverage on everything in the Super Nintendo universe — subscribe to SNES FORCE.

You better be quick though, New Year is just around the corner and prices are set to rise. So do yourself a favour, and save some cash at the same time, quickly fill in the coupon. Here's what you've missed already...

Back Issues

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Issue Four ☐ Issue Five ☐ Issue Six ☐

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74 **Subscribe**

SNES FORCE ■ December '93

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The Complete

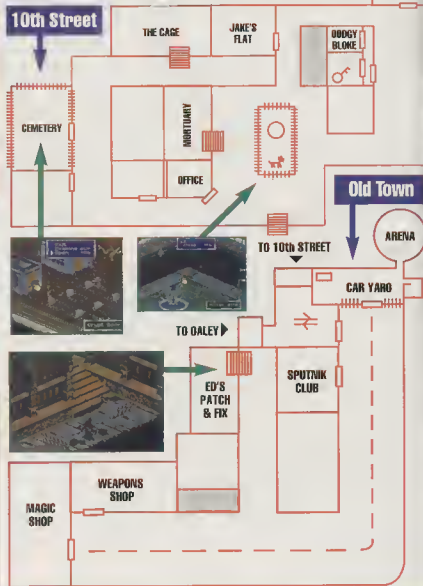
Having trouble with a rampant Jester Spirit? A Rat Shaman giving you hassle? Look no further for the ultimate *Shadowrun* guide.

This month's sees the epilogue to the *SFII Turbo* guide, as well as the first part of the definitive *Shadowrun* guide. All this plus the latest tips on all your favourite SNES games. Read on...

Index...

Battle Blaze.....	82
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Mickey's Magical Quest.....	82
Mortal Kombat.....	76 - 81
Shadowrun.....	76 - 81
Street Fighter II Turbo.....	81

Calling all games players! If you've got The Complete Solution to a hit SNES game, send it to us and you could earn big money. We pay £50 for the best maps or solutions used. Please send tips to *The Complete Solution*, Impact Magazines, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.



SMALL TIPS

Mortal Kombat

Game Genie codes
To activate these codes
you must have a Game
Genie unit.
With all of the codes for
this game DO NOT allow
any settings on the
option screens unless
specified. On a two-
player game DO NOT
alter the handicaps for
either player.

THE INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BEFORE USING CODES!!

Infinite time C86C884
Each round lasts twice
as long D683D04
Each round lasts
as long D683D04

60 seconds B6837A4 &
D0683D04
60 seconds 6F6837A4 &
D0683D04

70 seconds 5F6837A4 &
D0683D04
80 seconds 4F6837A4 &
D0683D04

90 seconds 9F6837A4 &
D0683D04
100 seconds 0F6837A4 &
D0683D04

30 seconds 7F6837A4 &
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40 seconds 4F6837A4 &
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22 minutes 2F6837A4 &
D0683D04

Daley

WASTELANDS CLUB

HUST STREET HQ

JAGGED RAILZ

HOTEL

OCTOPUS GAR

DOG

MATRIX

DRINK BUILDING

BAT REVER

DARK MADE HQ

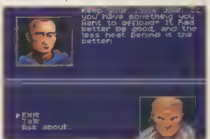
WEAPONS SHOP

AMER BUILDING

Leave the sewers and walk up the road into the Grim Reaper bar. Talk to the bermen and get an ICED

Enter the red brick building (the first one you come to, walking down the road) and go into the room nearest you, then kill anyone inside for some quick cash. Leave this building and go into the gray office block to the right of it, searching the first room for victims and taking the CYBERDECK from behind the glass partition in the second, ignore the secretary

Now check your cash, if you have 150 Kuyen or more then proceed, but if you've got less then it's back to three rooms with new shrodias in until your wallet bulges. Now go back to the brick building next to the grey offices on the corner and enter the room furthest from you. Talk to the bloke in the suit and get the essential keywords **HIRING** and **NEGOTIATION**.



Then ask him about LONESTAR. He sells you a fake cop badge for 150 Nguyen. Use this (Jake says he tucks it onto his pocket) and check your portrait on one of the opions screens to make sure you're wearing the sunglasses before returning to the mortuary and asking the mortician about GRINDER. He opens both filing cabinets, so search them for the TICKETS and a Universal Cash CREDITICK. Go back to the outside of the Grim Reaper and walk right off the screen and enter the cemetery with the bronze

Shadowrun

Complete Solution Part One

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 98. **W** — "I" switch off
 99. **W** — "I" switch off
 100. **W** — "I" switch off

gettes. Shoot loads of orlends until one of them leaves you a GHOUL BONE, then go to the crypt furthest left with the body hanging out the window and use the scalpel on the door to get in. Hint: this works on all CRYPT DOORS and some coffins have hidden cash bonuses. Talk to the INDIAN SHAMAN



after using the slap patch on him and he provides the key-word SHAMAN and gives you the essential MAGIC FETISH.

Now leave the cemetery and keep going down the road until you see some steps. Up the steps is The Cage club, but you have to give the tickets to the Heavy Bouncer troll first. Before going in use the creditcard in the phone in the lobby and call Sasie. Chat, then ask about the key-word CALLS she gives you, hang up and call GLUTMAN. Ask his secretary about THE CAGE (she gives you the word) then go into the club. Ah! Marie grand?



Walk straight over to the fat geezer sitting on a sofa on the left below the elige, he's GILMAN. Do what he tells you and end up in the CARYARDS, but at least there's a bed so you'd be well advised to save the game here before it gets very hairy.

Wander about until you've found the Arena and



chat to the obese little owner as fighting for him is the only way of raising enough cash to buy yourself out. Use this strategy: talk to fat man, fight, sleep in bed, use kenne on Firearms Skill, Body and once on Strength.

Keep doing this until you've got thousands of Nuyen and you've killed the Gang Leader, then go see The King and pay him four grand to leave. You're in a section of Seattle called the OLD TOWN explore a bit and find the weapons shop and upgrade to a Defiance T-250 SHOTGUN which costs a hefty 15,000 Nuyen! It's worth it because some characters' armour is resistant to anything weaker, including the rest of the villains in the arena (The King doesn't mind you coming and going whenever you like now, so return later if short of cash). Go to the magic shop and chat to the owner ask him about TALISMANS and he gives you his number for future reference. Search the display cases and buy the sheep wooden STAKE, it's pricey but comes in handy later. Now it's time to cure that headache so find Ed's Patch 'n' Fix surgery and ask him for an EXAMINATION. When the lool's finished messing with your brain talk to him and get the key-words HEAD COMPUTER and CORTEX BOMB, then shoot him for triggering it. Next, move to the station and walk straight on from the doors for the platform that takes you to DALEY Once in the biggest, cleanest, newest part of the city, waste the two hostile Orcs on the station and take the Iron Key, then head straight for the decent doctor's which is across the road from the station (where the Anaki Building is) and down, a huge grey building next to a market square with a Dancing Hippie in it. Ask the secretary about CORTEX BOMB and pay the doctor 2,000 Nuyen to get rid of it. He offers you some



CYBERWARE and that key-word, but it's wise to wait until you're flush with cash later on before purchasing any cybermatics.

Now you've gotta get into the exclusive Shadowrunner's club called JAGGED NAILS, but first you have to prove yourself by taking out the infamous RUST SILETLOCKS gang. Remember the two Orcs who attacked you as soon as you got here? Well, just next to the WASTELANDS club is the alley leading to their hang-out. Get over there and waste everyone until you get to the Iron Door, then open it with the corresponding key. Best to get some rest and use some Karma points in the hotel (50 Nuyen a night) before entering and killing everyone in the gangs HQ. All the end of the last room two rock solid Orcs turn up in hard armour and leave a crowbar when dispatched. It's probably a good idea to get some more sleep and hire a decent Shadowrunner (Nobert

is a good bet) from WASTELANDS before entering the final room and killing the gang leader, then picking up and examining the Password he leaves.

You can now get into JAGGED NAILS for the patty sum of 50 Nuyen, and uncover the wealth of intrigue it contains. First talk to the BARMAN (not the CLUB MANAGER) and he gives the key-word KITSUNE. She's the loxy lady in the green with the big red tail and you can bring her over by clicking on her. Chat for a bit and get background information on how she resurrected you. Ask about Dog and she gives you some ENCHANTED LEAVES, then it's time to heal.



After going drinking with the runners, find the Dog Spirit in a room in the Docks. The first door on the waterfront has a Matrix Systems computer behind it, break it open and grab their bank account! When you enter Dog's room, he appears in a puff of smoke and asks for three objects from his followers. These are: the Leaves from Kitsune in Jagged Nails (one of the earth), the Dog Collar from the dog outside the mortuary (one of creature) and the Magic Fetish from the Shaman in the Graveyard (one of man). You should have all these objects by now, so he gives you a HEAL spell and tells you to prove your friendship by killing the RAT SHAMAN for him. Her found in the sewers, which are just off the station, and are now open (such is the power of Dog). Nothing easier than waiting straight in and blowing the rodent-friend away, possibly with someone like Kitsune to give you a hand, but be warned that she dies quickly if you don't keep stopping and using her HEAL spell (level six). Seek out that canine spirit once more and he tells you what a good bloke you are, what a good shaman you are, and that you need two items that haven't rested in the earth — the meteoric paperweight found in the apartment next to Jake's pack in Tenth St, and the Ghoul Bone from the cemetery by shooting ghouls until one leaves it.

Next month in the conclusion of this guide, you'll learn how to defeat the evil Dark Blade, kill the Jester Spirit and finally face your murderer...

damage
High Punch 73201544
Low Punch 73211194
High Kick 065C1844
Low Kick 065C1014
Head Blow 065C1934
Knee 06511304
Crouched Kick 742B1154
Upstairs 56951904
Roundhouse 12521034
Foot Sweep 742B1114
Flying Kick 065C1334
Plying Kick 065C1844
Climb Kick 065C1334
While 065C1014
These codes all work for
JOHNNY CAGE only,
meaning his indicated
more powerful 136
High Punch 73201544
Low Punch 73211194
High Kick 065C1844
Low Kick 065C1014
Head Blow 742B1154
Knee 06511304
Crouched Kick 742B1154
Upstairs 56951904
Roundhouse 12521034
Foot Sweep 742B1114
Flying Kick 065C1334
Plying Kick 065C1844
Climb Kick 065C1334
While 065C1014
These codes all work for
SONYA BLADE only,
increasing the damage
done by the move
indicated.
High Punch 73201544
Low Punch 73211194

These codes all work for
increased damage done
by the move indicated:
High Punch 73201544
Low Punch 73211194
High Kick 065C1844
Low Kick 065C1014
Head Blow 742B1154
Knee 06511304
Crouched Kick 742B1154
Upstairs 56951904
Roundhouse 12521034
Foot Sweep 742B1114
Flying Kick 065C1334
Plying Kick 742B1154
Shin Kick 92311014
Flee Kick 065C1544
Split Punch 11551034
These codes all work for
LU KANG only,
increased damage done
by the move indicated:
High Punch 73201544
Low Punch 73211194
High Kick 065C1844
Low Kick 065C1014
Head Blow 742B1154
Knee 06511304
Crouched Kick 742B1154
Upstairs 56951904
Roundhouse 12521034
Foot Sweep 742B1114
Flying Kick 065C1334
Plying Kick 742B1154
Shin Kick 92311014
Flee Kick 065C1544
Split Punch 11551034
These codes all work for
SONYA BLADE only,
increasing the damage
done by the move
indicated.
High Punch 73201544
Low Punch 73211194

QJ Controllers

Leaders of the Pack....

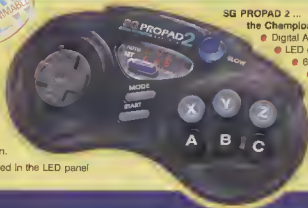
Looks to

KILL....



The new QJ SG ProPed 2 is designed to match the best of the new generation of video games for the SEGA Megadrive. It has a programmable feature which allows any combination of fire button moves to be assigned to a single left or right fire button.

The recorded combinations are all indicated in the LED panel



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the Champion's companion.

- Digital Autofire setting
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- 6-Button 'fighting' layout
- Programmable 'syncro-fire'
- Slow motion function
- Extra long connector cable

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Plays to

THRU....!

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- 8 memory spaces to program your own combinations
- Mirror function doubles number of pre-programmed moves
- LCD control panel to display action sequences
- Independent autofire control
- Slow motion
- See-thru casing.

SNES VERSION

SV 337

£39.99 inc. VAT.

SEGA VERSION

SV 437

£39.99 inc. VAT.



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Street Fighter

The Level Seven End Sequences

It's Christmas and what better present than the final installment of our *Street Fighter II Turbo* guide. It's time to check out all the game's new end sequences...



CHUN-LI

With Chun-Li's victory, she finally avenges her father's death and lays to rest the ghost that's haunted her since childhood. Now she can finally put the past behind her, change her clothes and return to being a young, free and single woman.



BLANKA

When Blanka beats M. Bison, a woman from the crowd runs forward shouting "Jimmie!" It turns out this old woman is Blanka's mother and the enkiets she gave to him as a birthday present prove it—they're reunited at last!



KEN

As Ken knocks Bison to the floor, his girlfriend Eliza runs into the arena, telling him that she came to find him so they could be together. This leads to marriage and living happily ever after—don't you just love happy endings?



High Kick 90E014F
Low Kick 9F2D301F
Head Blow 7A2D310F
Knee 0627308F
Crouched Kick 7A2D309F
Uppercut 562D304F
Roundhouse 112D305F
Foot Sweep 7A2D306F
Flying Punch 092D30CF
Flying Kick 7A2D304F
Leg Grab 03211F7
Sonic Rings 062E30CF
Special Kick 062D30CF
These codes all work for RAYDEN only, increasing the damage done by the relevant move:

High Punch F327C54A
High Kick F32D30CA
Low Kick 0921C10A
Head Blow 0427C03A
Knee 062E30CA
Crouched Kick F821C04A
Uppercut 562D313A
Roundhouse 9C2A301A
Foot Sweep 7A2D308A
Flying Punch 0827C14A
Flying Kick 7A2D304A
Thunderbolt 9C2E194A
Lightning 082E151A

These codes all work for SCORPION only, increasing the damage caused by the designated move:

High Punch F32A302A
High Kick F32D303A
Low Punch 062D4517
Low Kick 062F45C7
Head Blow 7A2D311A
Knee 062D304A
Crouched Kick F827A017
Uppercut 562A301A
Roundhouse 1D244147
Foot Sweep 7A2F4537
Flying Punch 092E313A
Flying Kick 7A2D4947
Harpoon F52C3015

These codes all work for SUB ZERO only, increasing the damage inflicted by the designated move:

High Punch F32A302A
Low Punch F32D303A
High Kick 062D4517
Low Kick 062F45C7
Head Blow 7A2D311A
Knee 062D304A
Crouched Kick F827A017
Uppercut 562A301A
Roundhouse 1D244147
Foot Sweep 7A2F4537
Flying Punch 092E313A
Flying Kick 7A2D4947
Harpoon F52C3015

These codes all work for SUB ZERO only, increasing the damage inflicted by the designated move:

High Punch F32A302A
Low Punch F32D303A
High Kick 062D4517
Low Kick 062F45C7
Head Blow 7A2D311A

BALROG



As the huge boxer raises his massive arms into the air, he thinks back to his childhood, remembering how fighting for his survival helped drag him out of the ghetto.

"YAAAAHHHH!!!...I'M NUMBER ONE!!
Shooting is a hard science, a
million-dollar BANG!! threats cut
his team at the head.
He remembers what he learned
growing up in the ghetto.
"SOMETIMES ONE OF THE FORMS OF
A MAN'S PISTOL CAN SAVE HIM
ON THE STREETS OF LIFE."



VEGA



Vega's hatred towards ugly people has propelled him to the position of the greatest street fighter in the world. In his mind, ugly people deserve no mercy so he destroys them.

HYDUS WRITER EXISTS ONLY FOR
THE BEAUTIFUL, YOU NATURALLY
ONLY A CORBOWS LOOK OF A MAN
LIKE ME COVER ME UP
VEGA stands over me, a
struggle, he has blond hair
and adds calm, LIKE UGLY
DESERVE NO MORE, SO I
DESTROYED THEM ALL!!



SAGITT



Even in his
moment of
triumph Sagat
can't help
thinking of Ryu.
He wants the
exponent to
return when
he's strong to
live with defeat.

The new "Kiss of Street Fighters" looks breezed for the "Madden's Master" who is strongly the most difficult to think "COME BACK RYU, BE TOUGHER AND LEARN HOW TO BE A LOSER. TODAY GREAT BEAR SHOWS I HAVE LEARNER AND OVERCOME..."



M. BISON



M. Bison's obsessive dream to take over the world is put into action the moment he confirms himself as the greatest warrior.

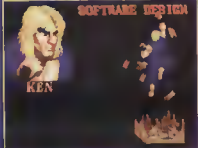
Standing with his cape flowing behind him, the "King of Biofiction" reaches as his armies rise up a table for the world. With the ring of his voice as fiat, the powers of nature will bow before his own civilization's control, bring forth death and



THE FINAL CHAPTER

If you finish the whole game on level seven without losing a credit, you receive a special ending. Instead of the characters fighting on a background, they each break a box.

SOFTWARE DESIGN



THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

Finish the game without losing a round and there's an even better ending! You get the box-breaking sequence again but after that there's a screen telling you that you've completely mastered that character. Check this out...

YOU HAVE MASTERED **KEN**!!



**Join us in four weeks
time for another
Complete Solution.**

Effect: $10+0.4=14$.

Player one plays
automatically 7E05CE00

Player two plays
automatically 7E07CE00

If player one starts
blending it never stops
5E00A0M

Auto block 7E054701
To see the end of the
game after one level
7E18AB01
Replace X with O-E for
level select 7E18AE0X

Battle Blaze

For my credits, on the title screen press [START] and [SELECT] to get to the options screen. Hold [L], press [UP] and [X] together. Hit [L] and [Y] at the same time, followed by [DOWN], [B], [RIGHT] and [A].

Combat Tribes

In two-player mode, enter the code as 9207. Both players can now choose the same character. On the title screen, press [START] and select 'versus' mode. Enter the following code for a great effect: 0197 1180 5093 1049 9207

Mickey's Magical Quest

On level 1.3 (the watery bit), get to the part with floating logs and a beaver — it's about half way through. Grab one of the yellow blocks just above the water. You can't swim with it, so drop it onto the beaver. It dispatches the fox. Go through the hole in the rock dam and you get a free life.

■ That's all for this month
see you again next issue.

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weapon (not illustrated)

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DELIVERY ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE).....

TOTAL
P&P
TOTAL
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Please tick here if you do not wish
to receive our mailings ☐

Level 8 SMITHERS
Level 3 SNOWBALL
Level 1 JEBEDIAH

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUNHOUSE (UK VERSION)

Here are the level codes for this character!

Level 1 HKDDB
Level 2 SKNATD
Level 3 SORCARTY
Level 4 BARTDICE
Level 5 BOUYJ2E

LAGON

11L0009F Infinite money
D40E000E Start at 61.2
D0E0000E Start at 1.980
40D0000E Start at 2.148
40D0000E Start at 2.992
11J0000G Gold at 22.116
D0E0000E Start on lev 4 40H+00B 10H+117 EXP 0ND
D0D0000E Start on lev 2 40H+01P HP+0292
EXP+020

D0E0000E Start on lev 4 10H+1212 HP+2000B EXP 0ND

D0E0000E Start on lev 5 40H+1218 HP+2000B EXP 0ND

10E00274 - 30E0000E Get 100 gold pieces

LEMMINGS (UK VERSION)

Hard down [Y] (or [SELECT] for starting) for a level select. Here are the codes for any INFANT level.

Fun level

2 7WJ0000 3 7WJ0000
4 3J0Y000 5 3J0Y000
8 8H0000F 7 8H0000F
9 8H0000F 8 8H0000F
10 1J0000F 11 1J0000F
12 0G0W00R 13 0G0W00R
14 0G0W00R 15 0G0W00R
16 0G0W00R 17 0G0W00R
18 0G0W00R 19 0G0W00R
20 0G0W00R 21 0G0W00R
22 0G0W00R 23 0G0W00R
24 0G0W00R 25 0G0W00R
26 0G0W00R 27 0G0W00R
28 0G0W00R 29 0G0W00R
30 0G0W00R

Timely level

1 0G0W00R 2 0G0W00R
3 0G0W00R 4 0G0W00R
5 0G0W00R 6 0G0W00R
7 0G0W00R 8 0G0W00R
9 0G0W00R 10 0G0W00R
11 0G0W00R 12 0G0W00R
13 0G0W00R 14 0G0W00R
15 0G0W00R 16 0G0W00R
17 0G0W00R 18 0G0W00R
19 0G0W00R 20 0G0W00R
21 0G0W00R 22 0G0W00R
23 0G0W00R 24 0G0W00R
25 0G0W00R 26 0G0W00R
27 0G0W00R 28 0G0W00R
29 0G0W00R 30 0G0W00R

Tough level

1 0G0W00R 2 0G0W00R
3 0G0W00R 4 0G0W00R
5 0G0W00R 6 0G0W00R
7 0G0W00R 8 0G0W00R
9 0G0W00R 10 0G0W00R
11 0G0W00R 12 0G0W00R
13 0G0W00R 14 0G0W00R
15 0G0W00R 16 0G0W00R
17 0G0W00R 18 0G0W00R
19 0G0W00R 20 0G0W00R
21 0G0W00R 22 0G0W00R
23 0G0W00R 24 0G0W00R
25 0G0W00R 26 0G0W00R
27 0G0W00R 28 0G0W00R
29 0G0W00R 30 0G0W00R

Mayhem level

1 0G0W00R 2 0G0W00R
3 0G0W00R 4 0G0W00R
5 0G0W00R 6 0G0W00R
7 0G0W00R 8 0G0W00R
9 0G0W00R 10 0G0W00R
11 0G0W00R 12 0G0W00R
13 0G0W00R 14 0G0W00R
15 0G0W00R 16 0G0W00R
17 0G0W00R 18 0G0W00R
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23 0G0W00R 24 0G0W00R
25 0G0W00R 26 0G0W00R
27 0G0W00R 28 0G0W00R
29 0G0W00R 30 0G0W00R

LETHAL WEAPON

11L0009F Infinite money

7E000000 Unlimited money
7E000000 Infinite ammo

LOST VIKINGS

11L0009F Infinite money

7E000000 Unlimited money

7E000000 Infinite ammo

7E000000 Infinite ammo

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0F0C3D07 & D4C3D0A7 12 second shot clock
D0C3D07 & D0C3D0A7 48 second shot clock — after the 1st round.

NHLPA HOCKEY

Here are codes for the final rounds of the game.

11L0009F Infinite money
7E000000 Unlimited money
7E000000 Infinite ammo

7E000000 Infinite ammo
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7E000000 Infinite ammo

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7E000000 Infinite ammo

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Here are the level codes.

1 0G0W00R 2 0G0W00R
3 0G0W00R 4 0G0W00R
5 0G0W00R 6 0G0W00R
7 0G0W00R 8 0G0W00R
9 0G0W00R 10 0G0W00R
11 0G0W00R 12 0G0W00R
13 0G0W00R 14 0G0W00R
15 0G0W00R 16 0G0W00R
17 0G0W00R 18 0G0W00R
19 0G0W00R 20 0G0W00R
21 0G0W00R 22 0G0W00R
23 0G0W00R 24 0G0W00R
25 0G0W00R 26 0G0W00R
27 0G0W00R 28 0G0W00R
29 0G0W00R 30 0G0W00R

On to the previous screen and enter SPECIAL when the selected screen is 0000000000. Now pause and press [B] (UP) [DOWN] [LEFT] [RIGHT] [L] [R] [START] and press [SELECT] to get a level select.

Now level select screen is 0000000000. Start with two health points. D4000000

Start with four health points. D0000000

Start with five health points. D0000000

Start with six health points. D1000000

Start with seven health points. D3000000

Start with eight health points. D0000000

Start with nine health points. D0000000

Start with ten health points. D0000000

Start with eleven health points. D0000000

Start with twelve health points. D0000000

Start with thirteen health points. D0000000

Start with fourteen health points. D0000000

Start with fifteen health points. D0000000

Start with sixteen health points. D0000000

Start with seventeen health points. D0000000

Start with eighteen health points. D0000000

Start with nineteen health points. D0000000

Start with twenty health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-one health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-two health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-three health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-four health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-five health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-six health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-seven health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-eight health points. D0000000

Start with twenty-nine health points. D0000000

Start with thirty health points. D0000000

Start with thirty-one health points. D0000000

Start with thirty-two health points. D0000000

Start with thirty-three health points. D0000000

Start with thirty-four health points. D0000000

Start with thirty-five health points. D0000000

OUT OF THIS WORLD

Level codes:

1 0G0W00R 2 0G0W00R 3 0G0W00R 4 0G0W00R 5 0G0W00R 6 0G0W00R 7 0G0W00R 8 0G0W00R 9 0G0W00R 10 0G0W00R 11 0G0W00R 12 0G0W00R 13 0G0W00R 14 0G0W00R 15 0G0W00R 16 0G0W00R 17 0G0W00R 18 0G0W00R 19 0G0W00R 20 0G0W00R 21 0G0W00R 22 0G0W00R 23 0G0W00R 24 0G0W00R 25 0G0W00R 26 0G0W00R 27 0G0W00R 28 0G0W00R 29 0G0W00R 30 0G0W00R

PAPERBOY 2

To make your story harder go to the options screen on the player-selection screen and enter 0000000000 by pressing [SELECT] on the keypad.

PARADOX

For fun level and sports, make the game and level codes:

1 0G0W00R 2 0G0W00R 3 0G0W00R 4 0G0W00R 5 0G0W00R 6 0G0W00R 7 0G0W00R 8 0G0W00R 9 0G0W00R 10 0G0W00R 11 0G0W00R 12 0G0W00R 13 0G0W00R 14 0G0W00R 15 0G0W00R 16 0G0W00R 17 0G0W00R 18 0G0W00R 19 0G0W00R 20 0G0W00R 21 0G0W00R 22 0G0W00R 23 0G0W00R 24 0G0W00R 25 0G0W00R 26 0G0W00R 27 0G0W00R 28 0G0W00R 29 0G0W00R 30 0G0W00R

To become invincible, make the game and level codes:

1 0G0W00R 2 0G0W00R 3 0G0W00R 4 0G0W00R 5 0G0W00R 6 0G0W00R 7 0G0W00R 8 0G0W00R 9 0G0W00R 10 0G0W00R 11 0G0W00R 12 0G0W00R 13 0G0W00R 14 0G0W00R 15 0G0W00R 16 0G0W00R 17 0G0W00R 18 0G0W00R 19 0G0W00R 20 0G0W00R 21 0G0W00R 22 0G0W00R 23 0G0W00R 24 0G0W00R 25 0G0W00R 26 0G0W00R 27 0G0W00R 28 0G0W00R 29 0G0W00R 30 0G0W00R

For three Star Bucks, make the game and level codes:

1 0G0W00R 2 0G0W00R 3 0G0W00R 4 0G0W00R 5 0G0W00R 6 0G0W00R 7 0G0W00R 8 0G0W00R 9 0G0W00R 10 0G0W00R 11 0G0W00R 12 0G0W00R 13 0G0W00R 14 0G0W00R 15 0G0W00R 16 0G0W00R 17 0G0W00R 18 0G0W00R 19 0G0W00R 20 0G0W00R 21 0G0W00R 22 0G0W00R 23 0G0W00R 24 0G0W00R 25 0G0W00R 26 0G0W00R 27 0G0W00R 28

Directory

For over 250 games reviewed and rated — a complete guide to what's hot and what's not on the Nintendo scene — you know where to come...

ACROBAT MISSION 65%

● **Teichiku**
Good soundtrack doesn't make up for the unoriginal gameplay

ACTRAISER 83%

● **Enix**
Sexy graphics and masses of violent gameplay make this a great adventure, which you should play for days and nights on end.

ADAMS FAMILY 88%

● **Ocean**
A lively one-player game with slick presentation and a funky soundtrack.

AGURI SUZUKI 83%

● **LOZC**
Fast, slick, well-presented racing sim with neat two-player option. Also known as F1 Super Driving. Plays better than it drives — good job really!

ALIEN 3 82%

● **Acclaim**
Possibly the best shoot-'em-up ever! Superb atmospheric graphics and excellent sound give the action an excellent feel. The missions are varied and very challenging. Guaranteed to keep blast fans occupied for ages



ALIENS VS PREDATOR 39%

● **IGS**
Great movie licence but this plodding beat-'em-up has flickering sprites and sluggish animation — a major disappointment!

ANOTHER WORLD 85%

● **Interplay**
The US version of the brilliant adventure Out Of This World. Cinematic 3D graphics and great puzzles. Very addictive but a little on the easy side

ARCADE 57%

● **Itai**
Tadpole Import adventure game that is let down by poor graphics and frustrating gameplay

ASSAULT SUITS VALKEN 89%

● **MCS**
Japanese version of Konami's superb shooter Cybernator

ASTRAL BOUT 42%

● **A-Wave**
A disappointing beat-'em-up short on moves and highly frustrating

ASTERIX 80%

● **Infogrames**
Detailed backgrounds, above average graphics and great presentation can't save this from being anything but an average platformer. Some nice touches, but nothing new

AUGUSTA MASTERS 81%

● **T&E Soft**

Impressive golf sim with the additional bonus of a handy battery back-up. Great graphics and straightforward gameplay

AXELAY 90%

● **Konami**
Superb graphics, mind-blowing 3D graphics. Great sound and excellent playability



BART'S NIGHTMARE 83%

● **Accolade**
A fun — but sometimes tedious — game with great cartoon graphics and a funky soundtrack

BATMAN RETURNS 82%

● **Konami**
Wonderful dark Gotham graphics and great sound, but ultimately just too easy and not varied enough

BATTLETOADS 71%

● **Tradewest**
Unpredictable gameplay coupled with humorous graphics, cool tunes and varied levels can't redeem an otherwise mediocre title

BATTLE BLAZE 33%

● **Sennry Corp**
Worst Street Fighter II clone ever. Lovely futuristic graphics, but literally only about four moves each!

BATTLE CLASH 35%

● **Nintendo**
An irritating little Robot shooting cart with nothing to sell it except that it's for the SuperScope. Wow!

BEAT-'EM-UP

Raw, aggressive unlearned biceps-bulging, fist-flying action is what this category is all about. But just because a game is rough doesn't mean it's necessarily good. The best beat-'em-ups always include a strong element of strategy (knowing exactly the best way to defeat an enemy). That's what makes *Street Fighter II* king!

BATTLE GRANO PRIK 75%

● **Nasat**
Impressive split-screen racer with simultaneous two-player option. Controls are a bit dodgy though!

BEST OF THE BEST 81%

● **Loriciel**
Unusual Martial Arts sim with great variety in moves but pretty sad graphics

SIG RUN 25%

● **Jaleco**
Dodgy graphics make this racer a non-starter. A game best forgotten about!

BILL LAMBIER'S COMBAT BASKETBALL 45%

● **Hudson Soft**
Early attempt at a brawling basketball sim. Plenty of violence but very little gameplay

BLAZEON 55%

● **Albus**
Undraining Japanese shooter with little new to offer in terms of graphics or playability

BLAZING SKIES 72%

● **Namcot**
Also known as Ace & High, the WWF Flying Elms recreates the thrills and spills of historic dog fights

BLUES BROTHERS 82%

● **Titus**
Good animation and sound, plenty of death, but very frustrating gameplay — especially in two-player mode

B.O.B. 86%

● **EA**
An excellent platform shooter with a good selection of power-ups and weapons. A good challenge let down only by a slight control problem

BOSSY THE BOBCAT 70%

● **Accolade**
Cosmetically excellent platformer let down by annoying controls. One hit and die system makes for frustrating gameplay

BULLS VS BLAZERS 78%

● **EA**
One of the better basketball sims featuring the NBA's top hottest teams but still not as good as Tecmo's Super NBA Basketball

CACOMA KNIGHT 72%

● **Datam**
Weird Japanese arcade game based on Qix, where you match up lines to form a picture. Fun for a while but not much usability

CALIFORNIA GAMES 2 36%

● **DTMC**
Appalling follow up to this arcade classic. Good six-player option but nothing else to offer. Nasty!

PLATFORM

The Nintendo specialty. So called because the action usually involves jumping across a series of platforms (usually danger lurks underneath so don't fall off) to reach a goal and fight a level guardian. The category has also grown to include all those jump-on-the-bad-guys'-heads games made popular by the Mario series.

To help you find the games you want — fast — we've used the Super League colour-codes. Use this key below, and on the bottom of each page, to effortlessly pin-point the game style you're after.

ARCADE

Not just all those games converted from classic coin-ops but also any that feature more than one style of gameplay.

ADVENTURE/RPG

Games that usually take you on an adventure to another time or world and encourage you to use brains rather than brawn to solve the challenge

C. RIPKEN JR. BASEBALL 68%

● Mindscape

A fun baseball sim with good FX and sampled speech. Great cut away close-up some are not as exciting when a home run is scored. Disappointing controls but gameplay is enjoyable for two but not for solo players.

CAWOUNTRY 68%

● TAITO

Also known as On The Ball. The constantly rotating play area is impressive for a while but there's very little attention to gameplay.

CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE AVENGERS 40%

● Mindscape

Some of the worst graphics ever, a poor soundtrack and frustrating gameplay conspire to make this arcade beat 'em-up conversion a big disappointment.

CASTLEVANIA IV 88%

● Konami

Outstanding presentation, excellent 3D and Mode 7 graphics and one of the best soundtracks around.

CHAMPIONSHIP POOL 83%

● Mindscape

Unexpensive graphics can't mar an excellent simulation. Loads of options — as good as it gets and then some!

CHESTER CHEETAH 65%

● Kaneko

A smooth well-presented game but lacking depth and polish. Graphics are pretty sketchy and gameplay is slow.

CHUCK ROCK 80%

● Sony

Large sprites, a rockin' tune and great playability — a bit little bit on the easy side though!

CLUE 66%

● Parker Bros

Amateur conversion of the classic board game Clue. Stick to the original if it's more enjoyable.

COMBAT TRIBES 47%

● American Technos

A pretty good conversion of the boring arcade beat-'em-up. Sprites are small and undeveloped.

COSMO GANG: THE VIDEO 45%

● Nemcot

Fussle attempt to revamp Space Invaders. Good two-player mode but not much else to offer.

CONTRA SPIRITS 82%

● Konami

Released in the UK as Super Probotector. An excellent one- or two-player blaster, but of power ups, mindless shooting and alien

blasting. Great graphics and FX — a bit light on levels though.



O-FORCE 44%

● Asmik

Visually unattractive, but so bad it's almost cool. Pretty sad graphics and loads of pointless Mode 7 make this a cut purchase only.

DARIUS TWIN 50%

● Taito

One of the original shoot-'em-ups. Now appears dated but there's still some (ast, button-fiddling action.

DAVID CRANE'S AMAZING TENNIS 88%

● Absolute

Indecible 3D animation and FX, large sprites and fast pace — needs more variety and a double's option.

DEINUS 75%

● Ocean

Average graphics, sprite animation and sound may put some people off before they reach the more interesting upper levels. Nothing new or exciting.

DEBERT STRIKE 87%

● EA

Straight conversion of the classic helicopter-based GUN War with deleted graphics, fast scrolling and addictive gameplay.

DINOSAURS 81%

● IREM

Great graphics but needs more levels — difficulty option adds variety.

ORACULA 78%

● Pygmalion

Get past the early levels and you're in for a treat. Colourful graphics and a lasting challenge make this great fun.

DRAGON'S LAIR 87%

● Elite

Excellent graphics, dodgy controls at first and damn hard — addictive as hell.

DRAXXEN 80%

● Infogrames

Plenty of playability and depth once you get past the early levels.

QUINQUO 84%

● Sony Imagesoft

Quinty Zelda style puzzle. A big challenge though the awkward perspective can make things difficult.

SHOOT-EM-UP

It all started way back with Space Invaders and Asteroids. Over a decade later the graphics have changed but the basic format is still the same. The theme is inevitably 'the planet has been invaded by evil aliens. Grab a gun/jump in your spaceship and blast everything in sight' — but that doesn't stop the action being fast, furious and very intense.

EXHAUST HEAT II 84%

● Self

The latest Mode 7 racer around. Three different car classes and loads of tracks — but isn't.

EXTRA INNINGS BASEBALL 87%

● Sony

Cutey one- or two-player baseball sim with excellent gameplay.

F1 ENHAUST HEAT 85%

● Ocean

Very playable Grand Prix sim featuring realistic tracks, a one- or two-player option and a battery back-up.

F-ZERO 82%

● Nintendo

Futuristic 3-D super-smooth racing game with excellent Mode 7 graphics — fast, brutal and fun.



F1 SUPER DRIVING 82%

● LOZC

Japanese version of Aguri Suzuki. Good digitised graphics and sprit FX — and thankfully it plays better than he drives!

FACEBALL 2000 72%

● Telsheku

Converted from the GB to the SNES. Better than average puzzler with plenty of shooting involved.

FATAL FURY 65%

● Takara

Another in the long line of SF2 clones. This 12 meg scrappier looks cool but is frustrating to play.

FINAL FIGHT 79%

● Capcom

This great conversion of the classic arcade hit is only let down by its lack of two-player option.

FINAL FIGHT 2 80%

● Capcom

A wash of Final Fight with a new difficulty setting. Excellent sprites and animation, but no thinking required. Not much of a challenge.

FINAL FIGHT GUY 75%

● Capcom

Special edition of Final Fight which comes with free CD and an extra character to choose. Still no two-player option though!

FIRST SAMURAI 85%

● Kemco

SPORTS/RACING

The widest ranging category of them all includes the major sports — golf, soccer, American football, tennis, motor racing (technically it is a sport), baseball, basketball — plus some unusual ones like crazy golf and ten-pin bowling. Playing sports isn't your chance to fulfill those moments you've always dreamed about — like scoring that winning goal in the World Cup final!

Great sprite detail, superb digitised speech, strategy sections, puzzles and a milder challenge make this a treat for the senses.

FINAL FANTASY II 76%

● Square

An excellent introduction to RPGs but lacks serious challenge. One for beginners only.

FORMULA ONE CIRCUS 58%

● Nichibutsu

Unconvincing Japanese racer with an overhead view and useless sprites and awful blippy sounds.

GAMBA LEAGUE

Japanese version of Extra Innings.

GEORGE FOREMAN'S HO BOXING 45%

● Accelint

Nasty Boxing sim, even the two-player option doesn't save it.

GEOMAN WARRIOR

Japanese version of The Legend of the Mystical Ninja.

GOOS 81%

● Mindscape

Tough puzzles and tedious first levels but gameplay gets better.

GOOF TROOP 83%

● Capcom

A prepubescent Zelda — a perfect introduction to puzzling for pre-teens but a challenge to everyone. Only one level but a great example of co-operation, not competition.

GOLDEN FIGHTER 54%

● Culture Brain

Amazing fighting game let down by poor the animation and gameplay.

GRADIUS III 87%

● Konami

One of the original horizontal shooters. Loads of great weapons and power-ups and super graphics.

GUN FORCE 70%

● Irem

Challenging but slow blaster with good graphics.

HARLEY'S HUMONGOUS ADVENTURE 86%

● Hi-Tec Expressions

One of the worst platform games around. We loathed it.

HAT TRICK HERO 86%

Also known as Super Soccer Champ. Amusing, unrealistic football game with two-player option. Frustrating gameplay.

HIT THE ICE 49%

● TAITO

SIMS/STRATEGY

The games you morn and dad want you to have! Many a clever gamer has managed to get their parents to buy them a simulation on the grounds that it's 'educational' and 'it will help with my homework, honest.' Strategy games (for example Populous and Powermancer) require a great deal of tactical planning.

Average conversion of arcade ice hockey on with the emphasis on fighting rather than skillful play. Tackles in one-player mode slightly more interesting for two.

HOLE IN ONE 53%

● **Hat**
A golf game with only one course? This buzzy golf game is a laugh for a few minutes, rapidly becomes boring.

HOME ALONE 18%

● **THQ**
Probably the singularly most appalling game on the SNES. Null said?

HOME ALONE 2 65%

● **THQ**
An improved sequel. Graphics are still a bit sketchy, but the gameplay is pretty addictive and some of the puzzles are a real laugh.

HOOK 81%

● **Sony**
Looks great, sounds great but falls down on playability.

HUMAN GRAND PRIX 81%

● **Human**
If it wasn't for the dodgy controls this would be one of the best racers on the market. Cool two-player split-screen option.

INCREDIBLE CRASH DUMMIES 75%

● **Acclaim**
Big, bawdy graphics, humorous overtones and nice animation can't save this from being an average, somewhat clumsy platformer.

IREM SKINS GAME 86%

● **IREM**
Excellent graphics and playability and a cool two-player option lets you play against males for cash.

JACK NICKLAUS COLF 77%

● **Konami**
Good sim, limited number of holes to play.

JAKI CRUSH 56%

● **Naxat soft**
A bit too repetitive, but just imagine playing pinball in an auditorium!

JAMES BOND JR 43%

● **THQ**
Unrealistic scrolling, awful sound and nasty animation.

JAMES BOND'S CRAZY SPORTS 38%

● **Sion/Sales Curve**
James should stick to platformers — cute sprites but gameplay requires a punnelling of the joyed rather than skill. Nothing to interest various players.

JERRY BOY 81%

● **Konami**
Japanese version of the weird but excellent platformer Smartball. Brilliant cartoon graphics make this a visual treat.

JEOPARDY 45%

● **Ganexak**
A poor console conversion of the American general knowledge TV quiz show. Needless to say all the questions are about, yes you guessed it, America!

J. CONNORS' TENNIS 70%

● **Ubi Soft**
Above-average tennis sim with lots of variation. Slow at first but good fun.

JOE & MAC 84%

● **Elite**
Stick smasher and smart visuals with a great two player — levels are a bit silly!

JOE & MAC 2 86%

● **Elite**
Don't be fooled by the name, this is nothing like the original although it is a very good game in its own right. Great gameplay!

JOHN MADDOEN'S '93 90%

● **EA**
Great sound, and good — but small — sports make this a brilliant one-player American football sim. The controls are hard at first but once mastered it's a great fun.



J. MADDOEN'S FOOTBALL 45%

● **EA**
Terrible conversion of one of the best American Football sim ever. Get the sequel!

JURASSIC PARK 82%

● **Ocean**
A monster of an adventure/shoot-'em-up. Amazing graphics and sound, a surprisingly addictive — it really pushes the SNES to its limits. Super!



KA-BLOODEY 60%

● **Kemco**
Also known as Bombuzal. Weird puzzler with the emphasis on blowing up bombs and balancing on platforms.

KIKIKAKAI 85%

● **Nile-um**
Also known as Rocky and Rocky. This wacky Japanese adventure has bags of character and classic end-of-level guardians.

KING ARTHUR'S ROUND 82%

● **Jaleco**
Excellent strategy/puzzle in the mould of Lemmings. Slow to start but lots of in-depth gameplay.

KING OF THE MONSTERS 70%

● **Takara**
Great animation but dodgy music and poor FX mean you'll soon get bored.

KING OF THE RALLY 65%

● **Midco**
Sparse racing game with good graphics but not enough challenge and very limited.

KK'S PLAYER MANAGER 86%

● **Anco**

Fruitless isotabity and hundreds of options make this one of the best in its field despite some dodgy graphics and slow spot FX.



LETHAL WEAPON 57%

● **Ocean**
Run-of-the-mill shooter with very sad gameplay.

LAGOON 75%

● **Kemco**
A huge, challenging RPG. Not in the same league as Zelda 3, but a solid, though sometimes tedious, piece of work.

LEGO 90%

● **Sunsoft**
Highly addictive strategy game with brilliant graphics and tunes. Over 180 levels to keep you going way into the early hours of the morning.

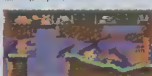


LETHAL WEAPON 57%

● **Ocean**
Run-of-the-mill shooter with very sad gameplay.

LETHAL WEAPON 57%

● **Interplay**
One of the most original games to grace the SNES. Lost Vikings combines excellent cartoon-style graphics with addictive gameplay. One of the best games released this year and a must for puzzle fans, others will be quickly converted.



MAGIC ADVENTURE 77%

● **Bandai**
Unusual Japanese game with good graphics but bland gameplay.

MARIO ALL STARS 82%

● **Nintendo**
Great value compilation cart featuring SMB2 & 3 and the previously unavailable Lost Levels. Improved graphics and sound.



MAGIC SWORD 64%

● **Capcom**
Probably Capcom's weakest game to date. Looks good but the gameplay is just too slow.

MADONNA 42%

● **Mindscape**
A vibrant attempt at an educational game.

using the popularity of the Mario Bros. Let down by restricted gameplay and level of difficulty.

MARIO PAINT 82%

● **Nintendo**
Fun packed but basic art package for kids.

MECH WARRIOR 79%

● **Activision**
A complicated action and strategy title.

MEGA LO MANIA 87%

● **Imaginar**
Brilliant strategy with near perfect presentation, lovely sound and user-friendly controls. Time-travelling battle making made easy!

MICKEY'S MAGICAL QUEST 81%

● **Capcom**
Superb game with great graphics and enchanting soundtrack. Gameplay is a little easy but can be altered to make the game more interesting.



NIGHT AND MAGIC II 84%

● **Elite**
A big game with loads to explore, but let's be honest a bit in the excitement stakes, one of the best first person perspective RPGs so far.

NOPI 25%

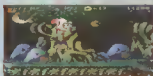
● **Parker Bros**
Bad sound and FX make this poor conversion of the board game very boring!

MORTAL KOMBAT 87%

● **Acclaim**
Excellent graphics and gameplay, but lacks the challenge of SFII. Great sound, good two player game.

MR NUTZ 80%

● **Ocean**
Arcade quality, well above average platformer. With big, well defined sprites and some of the grooviest waltzes seen on the SNES it's a joy to play.



MUSYA 60%

● **Datam**
Japanese cart with some nice touches, but nothing to really keep you playing.

MYSTICAL NINJA 88%

● **Konami**
US version of Goemon Warrior. Excellent one- and two-player game, with loads of options and levels — brilliant!

NBA ALL-STAR CHAL 63%

● **Acclaim**

Arcade

Adventure/RPG

Beat-'em-up

Platform

Simplified basketball sim with good graphics and five small sub-games but no match option

NCAA BASKETBALL 88%

● Nintendo
Also called Super Slam Dunk this visually stunning basketball sim uses Mode 7 to great effect

NHLPA HOCKEY 81%

● EA
Slightly disappointing conversion of the brilliant Mega Drive Ice Hockey game EA Hockey 92

NHLPA HOCKEY '83 73%

● EA
Updated sequel with much improved playability, loads of stats and funous fighting scenes

NIGEL MANSELL'S F1 CHALLENGE 82%

● Granfin
A polished, fast paced and very playable racer, with a full season's racing and a password system. A high speed drive without the nightmare of a complex sim

NOLAN RYAN'S BASEBALL 64%

● Roster
Disappointing licence from the best pitcher in the Major League. Plenty of stats but not enough has gone into gameplay

OUT OF THIS WORLD 85%

● Interplay
UK version of Asteroid World. A unique combination of textured polygons and sci-fi backdrops make this atmospheric and very addictive

OUT TO LUNCH 83%

● Mindscape
An amusing and entertaining platform — colourful, detailed, great parallax scrolling, easy to pick up and includes a great soundtrack

PAPERBOY 2 33%

● Mindscape
A horrible conversion of a horrible game. Very dated and very poor

PARDIUS 87%

● Konami
Fun gameplay, excellent graphics and great tunes make this a real laugh — a bit easy!

PEBBLE BEACH GOLF 83%

● T&E Soft
Brilliant digitized graphics and simple but responsive control's. Only one course!

PGA TOUR GOLF 85%

● EA
The most accurate of golfing sims. Many may find play four rounds in a championship a little boring but hey — that's golf!

PHALANX 74%

● Kemco
Unoriginal and frustrating gameplay saved only by clean, sharp graphics

PILOTWINGS 81%

● Nintendo

Unbelievable graphics and scrolling make this one of the best flight sims around. Eight locations with lots of variation means you just can't stop yourself playing. The ultimate flying game!



PIT-FIGHTER 74%

● Kemco
A two player puzzle high on good graphics but short on title

PIT-FIGHTER 36%

● T-HQ
Awful conversion of the arcade fighting game. Two player option but difficulty is way too hard

POCKY AND ROCKY 74%

● Nelaume
See Kikaku

PDP 'N TWINBEE 80%

● Konami
This colourful shooter combines the excellent graphics of Asterix with the cute appeal of Pardius. Atmospheric tunes and great level bosses make this a real treat to the senses. A little too easy in one player mode

POPULOUS 81%

● Anco
A kind of strategy games. Maybe getting a little long in the tooth but still gives most games of its kind a run for its money

POWER ATHLETE 25%

● Konami
Oh no, another SF2 clone. Only with graphics a Game Gear would reject

POWERMONGER 64%

● Powermonger
With a good mouse this battle strategy sim is a great conversion of the Amiga classic. If not the control method is very slow and frustrating

PRINCE OF PERSIA 88%

● Konami
Stunning graphics and backdrops with great animation and atmospheric music. Two levels of action and puzzles make this very addictive — excellent use of a password system!

PRO QUARTERBACK 66%

● Tradewest
Visually stunning but ultimately boring American Football simulation. Uses a unusual 3D Mode 7 perspective but plays are too difficult to complete

PUGSLEY'S SCAVENGER HUNT 85%

● Ocean
Very good sequel to the first Adams Family release, boasting incredible graphics and sparkling tunes — not as playable though!

78%

● Ocean
Domino Rally-style puzzler to blow your

brain cells, ported across from the Amiga.

64%

● NTVC
Cool graphics but monotonous gameplay soon gets boring

RACE DRIVING 25%

● T.HQ
One of the worst racing games of all time

RAD PSYCHE RACING 26%

● ?
Don't venture anywhere near this gigantic outrageous pile of doggy do's. It's awful

RAIDEN TRAD 65%

● Electro Brain
Another arcade blaster featuring a two-player simultaneous option but not much else

RAMPART 51%

● EA
Wall-building sim with below average graphics and poor sound — lacks depth

RANIMA 1/2 80%

● NCS
Cute Japanese Anime beat 'em up based on popular cult cartoon. A fluffily version of SF2. Weird and wacky but not as good as the sequel

RANIMA 1/2 PART 2 85%

● NCS
Excellent and even weirder sequel to Ranima. Great moves and graphics but a little easy!

RIVAL TURF 55%

● Jaleco
Scrolling beat 'em up with nice graphics but no two player option and limited controls

ROAD RUNNER: DEATH VALLEY RALLY 73%

● Sunsoft
Superb graphics, fun gameplay with great Warner Bros theme — awkward controls

ROBOCOP 3 48%

● Ocean
Above average backgrounds but bad animation and sprites make gameplay far too frustrating

ROCK & ROLL RACING 90%

● Interplay
Classic soundtrack, great sampled speech and a wicked though slightly squashed, two-player game make this a winner. Mass destruction with a weird perspective



ROGER CLEMENS MVP BASEBALL 45%

● Accolite
Disappointing baseball sim from the Major League's most talented pitcher. Not worth the money

ROYAL RUMBLE 80%

● Accolite

This sequel to WWF Wrestlemania is an improvement but doesn't go far enough. Fun in two player mode but not enough variety for the solo player. Presentation is good but ultimately too easy

RPM RACING 68%

● Interplay
OK Road racer with split screen for simultaneous two-player head-to-head challenge

RUSHING BEAT RUN 74%

● Jaleco
Sequel To Rival Turf with improved characters and graphics but not enough variation in gameplay

SHADOW RUN 92%

● Data East
Addictive and playable adventure/rac with cool sounds, vivid sprites and logical puzzles. Rivals Zorka for best of its class



SKY CITY 88%

● Nintendo
Excellent city-building sim with colourful visuals and addictive gameplay. Over 1,000 land-forms and three difficulty levels — you'll be playing for ages!

SKY EARTH 74%

● Imagineer
A strange but interesting 'adventure/rac' cart. An interesting and ecologically sound puzzle simulation

SKULL JAGGER 62%

● American Softworks
This hack 'n' slash party affair is too frustrating to be an essential purchase

SKY S 81%

● Konami
See Blazing Skies

SMART BALL 81%

US version of Jerry Boy. Messes of power up, colourful visuals and an enormous playing area in this cute platform adventure — very addictive but a little too easy

SONIC BLAST MAN 68%

● Telo
Active emulation and colourful backdrops but too repetitive to provide a lasting challenge

SOUL BLAZER 64%

● Enix
This wacky sequel to Actraiser looks great but is far too simple. A great introduction to arcade-style RPGs but it shouldn't take more than a week or so to finish it

SPANKY'S QUEST 75%

● Netnams
Platform based arcade action starring an ape. Work your way through he endless levels (armed only with an unlimited supply of belts) looking for keys — fun but limited

SPIDERMAN AND THE K-MEN 75%

● Accolite

A real disappointment considering how good *Spidey on the MD* was. There's plenty of variety in gameplay but there's simply not enough action. Good Guns and Roses style theme tune but not much else. Comes late on only.

SPIDZY WORLDS 82%

● ASCII

A unique 3D puzzle game for advanced game fiends. Lots to do but gameplay can become frustrating.

STARFOX 95%

● Nintendo

Japanese version of visually impressive space-based 3D shooter featuring new SPX ship. Not as good as we hoped — and a little on the easy side — but still a great gaming experience. Not to sure about the hefty price tag though.

STARWING

Official UK version of StarFox.

SF II 92%

● Capcom

The best beat 'em up ever! Huge 16-meg art boasting awesome graphics and incredible long-lasting playability. The only fault is the minor control problems — some of the special moves take a while to master but once you sort this out the game is only limited by your own skill!



SF II TURBO 98%

● Capcom

With superb speed, sound, graphics and addictions, *SF II Turbo* is the best beat-'em-up to date. Four new characters to master, loads of new moves and super-leal gameplay — you won't know what hit you!



STRIKE GUNNER 93%

● NTSC

A limited-appeal blaster with armatured two-player option but far too easy!

STRIKER 92%

● Sega

Loads of options allow you to customise every stage of gameplay from players' attributes to pitch surface. Very easy in one-player mode but the 64 teams make two-player games great fun.

SUNSET RIDERS 99%

● Konami

ArCADE perfect conversion, a brilliant side-on shoot-'em-up, it's bright, loud and great fun. Easy to pick up, hard to finish.

SUPER ACTION FBALL 77%

● Nintendo

This innovative American football sim uses an unusual slanted perspective in attempt to

capture the thro' n' splits of NFL action. Unfortunately it only succeeds in giving the action a disorienting feel. Still a pretty good game though not in Madden's class.

SUPER ADVENTURE ISL 84%

● Hudson Soft

This fast collecting arcade classic has been around for years but still plays and looks good. Good graphics and a wicked soundtrack let down by frustrating gameplay.

SUPER AIR DIVER 83%

● Sunsoft

Amazingly fast, extremely addictive and visually tremendous shoot-'em-up incorporating stunning level 7 scrolling.

SUPER ALESTE 78%

● TOHO

A fast vertical shoot-'em-up that's really rather nice and detailed.

SUPER BASES LOADED 45%

● Jaleco

Also known as Super Pro Baseball. Sleazy baseball sim with an unfinishing look to the graphics — good gameplay but lacks presentation.

SUPER BATTER UP 93%

● Namco

Definitely no picture to look at but get past the sleazy part-by-numbers graphics and this is one of the better baseball sims. Quick and responsive with plenty of good gameplay.

57%

● Absolute

A far too basic tank sim launched on the back of the Gulf War. Superb graphics but the controls are frustrating and the constant clicking between map screens to find your location drives you crazy.

SUPER BOMBERMAN 91%

● Hudsonsoft

The best multi-player game around. Grab a four-player adapter and this otherwise limp one-player game transforms into an addictive and exciting experience.

SUPER BOWLING 70%

● Tachyon

A good four-player cartoon-style ten-pin bowling sim with a real raunchy rock 'n' roll soundtrack. Fun with friends but boring on your own. Once you master this little game on the lane you can score a strike every time.

SUPER CUP SOCCER 72%

● Jaleco

Also known as Super Goal. Easy to play one- and two-player side-on soccer sim lacking variety and realism — there's no yellow or red cards!

SUPER DOUBLE DRAGON 70%

● Tadeval

Rough 'n' ready sideways scrolling beat-'em-up. Graphics and FX are bland but gameplay is fun specially for two players.

SUPER DUNKSHOT

See NCAA Basketball

SUPER FIRE PRO WRESTLING 45%

● Human

Hilariously bad to the point of almost being good simultaneous four-player multi tap wrestling game.

SUPER FORMATION SOCCER 84%

● Human

Slightly inferior Japanese version of Super Soccer. Stick 3D looks sim with great graphics. One- and two-player option plus two players simultaneously against the computer. Moves are a little limited and the version has no yellow cards or penalty shoot out option.

SUPER FORMATION SOCCER 2 70%

● Human

Fun four player mode, but needs more variety for soloists. Despite the redrawn graphics, no real improvements over the original.

SUPER GOAL

See Super Cup Soccer

SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS 89%

● Capcom

Classic arcade action that still stands the test of time. Very challenging and occasionally sluggish — a real test of your skills.

SUPER JAMES POND 95%

● Ocean

This classic features some of the most colourful graphics of any NES game but suffers from a ridiculously easy difficulty setting and slow gameplay. Best suited to young players.

SUPER KICK OFF 76%

● Anco

Overhead view fast football game with zillions of options — poor scrolling leads to frustrating gameplay.

SUPER NBA BASKETBALL 88%

● Tecmo

Brilliant official NBA basketball game with slick scrolling, incredible fast pace and great controls. The best live-on-five game available.

SUPER MARIO KART 90%

● Nintendo

The best racing game ever! Yes, Mario and the gang are back in an incredibly-addictive karting game. There are three difficulty settings — one- and two-player options plus a choice of Grand Prix, Battle or Time Trial. Non-stop fun but maybe a bit limited for solo drivers.



SUPER MARIO WORLD 96%

● Nintendo

Mario's first true adventure is packed with 96 levels to explore and masses of tricky puzzles to solve, bonus rooms to find and special worlds to conquer. Superb cut-scenes, brilliant theme tune and the best

playability ever — recommended to everyone.



SUPER OFF-ROAD 91%

● Tradewest

Race off-road trucks around indoor circuits filled with hazardous obstacles. Prize money is awarded depending on position and there's a plenty of upgrades to buy and different levels but repetitive gameplay gets boring.

SUPER PANG 86%

● Capcom

This bubble-bursting arcade conversion pits a boy and his gun against ever-increasing quantities of bubbles. The aim is to be at the top and pop the power-ups before moving onto the next level while things get even tougher. Great gameplay but no two-player game. Highly addictive.

SUPER PLAY ACTION FOOTBALL 77%

● Nintendo

Disappointing American football sim considering how brilliant Nintendo's other releases have been. All 26 NFL teams are here, plus College and High School teams. Features three different control systems depending on difficulty and some cool moves but is missing vital ingredients in the gameplay department. Could've been wonderful. Oh well.

SUPER PRO BASEBALL

See Super Bases Loaded

SUPER PROTECTOR

See Contra Spirits Also known in US as Contra II.

SUPER PUTTY 87%

● System 3

Fantastic, bright graphics, great sound and a groovy control method am hampered by serious difficulty and only four levels.

SUPER R-TYPE 93%

● IREM

One of the first true UK Pal Super Nintendo releases and it's easy to see why. This highly addictive sideways-scrolling power-up blaster has loads of power-ups, great graphics and sound and a nice and tough difficulty setting.

SUPER SMASH TV 87%

● Acclaim

Based on futuristic Fighting Man style quiz show where the aim is to kill or be killed. Slick and sharp presentation with great sampling and music make this action packed arcade conversion addictive as hell. Firing controls are a bit tricky at first as each of the four buttons fires in a different direction but this doesn't take too long to get to grips with.

SUPER SOCCER CHAMP

See Hat-Trick Hero

SUPER STAR WARS 92%

One of the best shoot-'em-ups of all time and a total gaming experience. From the second

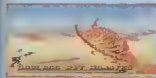
Arcade

Adventure/RPG

Beat-'em-up

Platform

the amazing movie-style introduction and slurring these ture starts up you're hooked. A top notch game that is instantly addictive. Brilliant visuals, brilliant FX and it is so simple to play it's unbelievable. The only problem is that it's not too difficult to complete but even so you won't be able to stop going back for another go. Definitely has to be seen (and heard!) to be believed.



ER S KE EAGLE 78%

● **MicroProse**
A fast and furious light 'em up featuring excellent mode 7 scaling and rotation. Gameplay becomes repetitive after a bit of play though.

SUPER STRIKE GUNNER 55%

● **NTVC**
Very easy up the screen space-based shooter that takes about an hour to complete. No testability at all.

SUPER SWAT 78%

● **Storm**
Great graphics packed with detail but meagre-though gameplay and no continues is very frustrating. Two-player simultaneous game is much more playable.

SUPER TENNIS 88%

● **Nintendo**
Loads of options to choose from including an excellent two-players mode. With good cartoon-style graphics, above average FX and one of the most playable control systems ever. This tennis sim is a very addictive and very realistic. One of the best sports games ever.

SUPER TETRIS + BOMBLUSS 85%

● **BPS**
Straight conversion of the fiendishly addictive Tetris. Graphics are nothing special but the gameplay is superb as ever. Bombluss is a great game in its own right and combining the two is a great value for money can't if you're a fan of classic puzzlers.

SUPER VALIS 80%

● **Telnet**
Another in a long line of easy Japanese platformers. Graphics and backgrounds are cool but gameplay isn't challenging at all.

T2 JUDGMENT DAY 46%

● **Acclaim**
Another disappointing film license. T2 promises so much but delivers very little. Frustrating gameplay and sketchy graphics result in limited replayability.

TAZ-MAHIA 88%

● **THQ**
A perfect combination of racing game and collect-'em-up. The graphics and the sound is excellent although gameplay becomes repetitive.

TERMINATOR 55%

● **Mindcape**
Boring and frustrating licence that promises

so much and delivers very little. Despite a good intro sequence, atmospheric visuals and digitized movie stars you get to the action the gameplay tells flat. Levels are huge but it's very hard and quickly becomes frustrating, annoying and then boring.

TEST DRIVE II 78%

● **Accolade**
Realistic sports car challenge against computer. There's a choice of four classic sports cars and a great in-the-cockpit view. The aim is on realism so you really get a feel for speed. There are a number of highways to race on and a few nice touches like fire spitting on the windscreen and the grumpy cop who arrests you for speeding. But lacks excitement.

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER 55%

● **Hi-Tech Expressions**
Limited and almost unrecognizable Super Scope conversion of the popular submarine suspense movie starring Sean Connery and William Baldwin. Dodgy graphics and uninspiring gameplay make sure this link is rather than swims.

THE REN AND STIMPY SHOW: VEEDROT 79%

● **THQ**
Excellent presentation but only four levels make this too easy to complete. Fun and frantic, it's crazy all the way!

TINY TUNOS 87%

● **Konami**
Visually stunning cartoon platformer starring the Warner Bros gang. The dash control takes a while to get used to but once mastered is brilliant. The sub-games are superb — that's even a mini American football game!

THE ROCKETEER 45%

● **IGS**
Poor Disney licence of a very bad film. In the early rounds the action consists of racing a plane around in circles against computer-controlled opponents but later goes onto include beat-'em-up sections.

THUNDER SPIRITS 65%

● **Seika**
Another in a long line of samurai Japanese shoot-'em-ups. Decent graphics but nothing in the gameplay department to interest.

TOM AND JERRY 44%

● **Hi-Tech Expressions**
A hilarious conversion of a classic. Some really good graphics but the annoying control system makes gameplay really frustrating.

TOP GEAR 88%

● **Kemco**
Also known as Top Racer in Japan, this is one of the great racing games of all time. Four cars, loads of tracks and super gameplay make sure you'll be playing under the chequered flag comes down.

TOP GEAR 2 84%

● **Kemco**
An update of Top Gear, this improved version includes a whole host of add-ons and a huge amount of tracks. Nice, clear graphics but average sound. One for enthusiasts.

TROJERS 65%

● **Storm**
An unoriginal, well made puzzle! Fun in two player mode but one player needs more variety. With 175 levels it's quite a challenge. Entertaining and uncomplicated.

TUFF E NUFF 65%

● **Jaleco**
An above average beat-'em-up with large sprites, impressive speech and an action replay feature.

TURTLES IN TIME 75%

● **Konami**
Great visuals with rock'n'roll sounds and speech. Fun to play but lacks challenge and variety.

ULTRAMAN 51%

● **Bandai**
Seasoned Japanese beat-'em up which looks pretty cool at date these days. Some good touches but otherwise lifeless.

UN SQUADRON 83%

● **Capcom**
One of the earliest Capcom classics this impressive arcade-style plane-based shooter still strikes the level of fun pretty well. It was a major hit on the Super Famicom and it's going strong to this day. There are plenty of weapons, loads of enemies and impressive graphics, unfortunately it suffers badly from slow down when there is plenty of action on-screen.

WALALA COUNTRY CLUB 76%

● **T&E Soft**
Graphically impressive but plodding golf aim over one of the world's most spectacular and unforgiving courses. The scenery takes your breath away but the gameplay is too slow.

WARP SPEED 75%

● **Accolade**
Cool looking space-based shooter with very impressive use of Mode 7. Gameplay is slow as you fight enemies one on-one rather than blast it out with a whole fleet.

WHEEL OF FOR 37%

● **Gemtek**
American Hangman-style TV quiz game that is a laugh for a group but tiresome for the single player.

WING COMMANDER 84%

● **Mindcape**
An excellent intergalactic fighting adventure with stunning visuals, codes of missions and space suits to blow away. Graphics can be a bit dodgy and there is some slowdown when the action gets really hot.

WING COMMANDER 81%

● **Mindcape**
An improved version of Wing Commander with all new missions but an identical format.

WORLD CLASS RUGBY 78%

● **Ima Glee**
Unusual but enjoyable cartoon rugby action sim released on the back of the popularity of the World Cup.

WORLD CLASS RUGBY 65%

● **MicroProse**
A strange and disappointing twist to Tetris. Matching letters instead of blocks doesn't work anywhere near as well.

WWF WRESTLEMANIA 80%

● **Acclaim**
A good arcade conversion capturing all the thrills and spills of WWF wrestling. Tough at first with a lot of button prodding.

X-ZONE 61%

● **Kemco**
Another SuperScope game, and easily the best of a very bad bunch. The aim of this shooter is to overcome the defences of a computer that's gone out of control.

XARION 60%

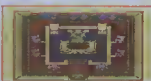
● **Aesuli**
Zip blaster with neat graphics but just not that great. The highlight is the smooth scrolling and the Contra-type gameplay which raises it to just-above-average.

YOUNG GUNS 79%

● **Nintendo**
Cute, competent puzzle. With fast, furious two-player mode and bags of Mario appeal make this a good alternative to Tetris.

ZELDA 3 : A LINK TO THE PAST 83%

● **Nintendo**
A superb RPG with great effects and 3-D maps. The graphics aren't spectacular but the riveting gameplay and the challenging but not overbearing puzzles make this one of the best games ever.



ZOMBIES 80%

● **Konami**
An excellent 8-bit homage. Varied villains from psycho babies to chainsaw-wielding madman and a fantastic arcade style make this a fun, furious brawler of a cart.



That's all for this month — join us next issue for even more reviews and ratings. Remember, for all the game info you'll ever need, Directory Enquiries has it all...

Puzzle

Sports/Racing

Sports/Racing

Sims/Strategy

The Professionals

What exactly do the select group of people known as the playtesters do all day? Who are they and what's it like to have the job most gamers-players would kill for?

And who, we hear you ask, are they? They're Ocean's games testers, the select few who see all the top games months ahead of their release dates and can actually influence the finished product substantially.

Ask any teenager what they'd like to be when they leave school. Traditionally, the answers may have been 'a musician', 'a footballer', but more recently 'a playtester' leeches strongly. Our very own top gamesplayer Simon Hill was one such devotee — he wrote to big software companies like Ocean, Sega, Microprose, Anco, US Gold — wait everyone and their cat. His own idea of a playtester was a common misconception — that it would be easy to sit and play games all day, looking for bugs and having a laugh. Okay, that is an important part of the job, but there is more — quite a lot more.

We spoke to top tester Paul Flanagan, one of the people behind the de-bugging of games like *Jurassic Park* — incidentally, his favourite game on both the NES and NES — and *Lethal Weapon* Al the nre old age of 20. Paul has two years of testing experience under his belt. After re-losing his GCSEs at sixth form college, he went on to a computer training course, and got the job after responding to an ad in his local paper. One interview led to another, and Ocean offered him the hallowed title of Games Tester.

It's a living

Sounds great, but what does a game tester actually do? Well, they test games. It sounds dumb, but that's what they do—they play a game through looking for any bugs, dodgy playability or corrupted pixels and send it back to the programmers with a progress

report. Games have to be played through on every format (ie on the Amiga, a game must be tested on the 12, 13 with and without upgrade, 500+, 600, 600HD, 1200, 1200HD, 3000 and 4000 Phaw!) and every part of the game explored. Can you imagine doing that with *Jurassic Park* or *Flashback*? I'm apparently not as easy as many people imagine. I came in at 9:30am last Tuesday and tested *Jurassic* on the PC. We got a new version in at about 7pm, and I tested that through the night until about 6am the next morning. Paul went on. Then I was whisked off to ABLEX (a disk duplication company) and tested their game samples. I got home at about 3:30pm on Wednesday.

There goes the myth about just playing games all day! There's a lot of pressure in the job. If anything goes wrong, it gets fired back to you. When a game comes in for a season release it's a pretty loose deadline, but it's a deadline nevertheless. So why



There's a lot of pressure in the job. If anything goes wrong, it gets traced back to you.

stay in such a high-pressure, long-day job? 'It's the people I work with, those moral guardians constantly striving to protect me from the evils of the outside world.' Himmig.

The Paul Flanagan we saw is an extremely hard-working, intelligent and funny individual, so where does this 'easy life' image come from? Many people we've spoken to on the subject think of gameplayers — testers in particular — as social misfits, people

who sit hunched in front of a TV screen all day with nothing else on their minds other than how to complete the level or defeat the bad guy. Not so. At Ocean, the playtester's work area is lively, full of idle banter but with an air of something actually being done while the perpetrators have fun. It's nothing like any other office (apart from other playtesters!), it's full of young, enthusiastic people with a passion for their work. Paul even has a social life outside work. He's an avid Stockport County fan - "Better than their Manchester rivals," he enthuses, and he loves a cool pool of Stella Artois at the end of a hard working day - playing games. Ah yes, back to that point. Many of you could probably happily play games all day but that's the difference between the myth and reality of games testing. You and the rest of the games buying population play games for fun - for these guys and gals their job, their *livelihood*, can kill or

make a game. They can hardly sit back and enjoy a cart if they're constantly looking for glitches, corruptions and bugs. Exploring every aspect of every Ocean release is an enormous, time-consuming task and isn't to be taken lightly.

On the game

A playtester's dedication is such that, in extreme situations, the job 'Could involve going out to the programmer's house and working closely with them in order to perfect the product. Jurassic was brilliant, the programmers are in the same building so we worked really closely and I think that shows in the smooth playability and gameplay'.

Testlers also help the PR department because they don't know the game hall as well as the professional players. They handle TV appearances, pose for publicity shots — it's a lot of responsibility.

Having played Paul in *European Champions*, an Amiga looly game he's been lasting for eight months, our very own Jon Brulford now knows the on of an 11-0 defeat. Paul knows every inch port slim, and his dedication came shining his victorious laughter.

Games testing is far from easy, it's a demanding, time consuming but ultimately satisfying job. To test games, a natural aptitude for playing is a must, and a willingness to work ridiculously long hours is a help. It just goes to show — if you want a job done go to the professionals.

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